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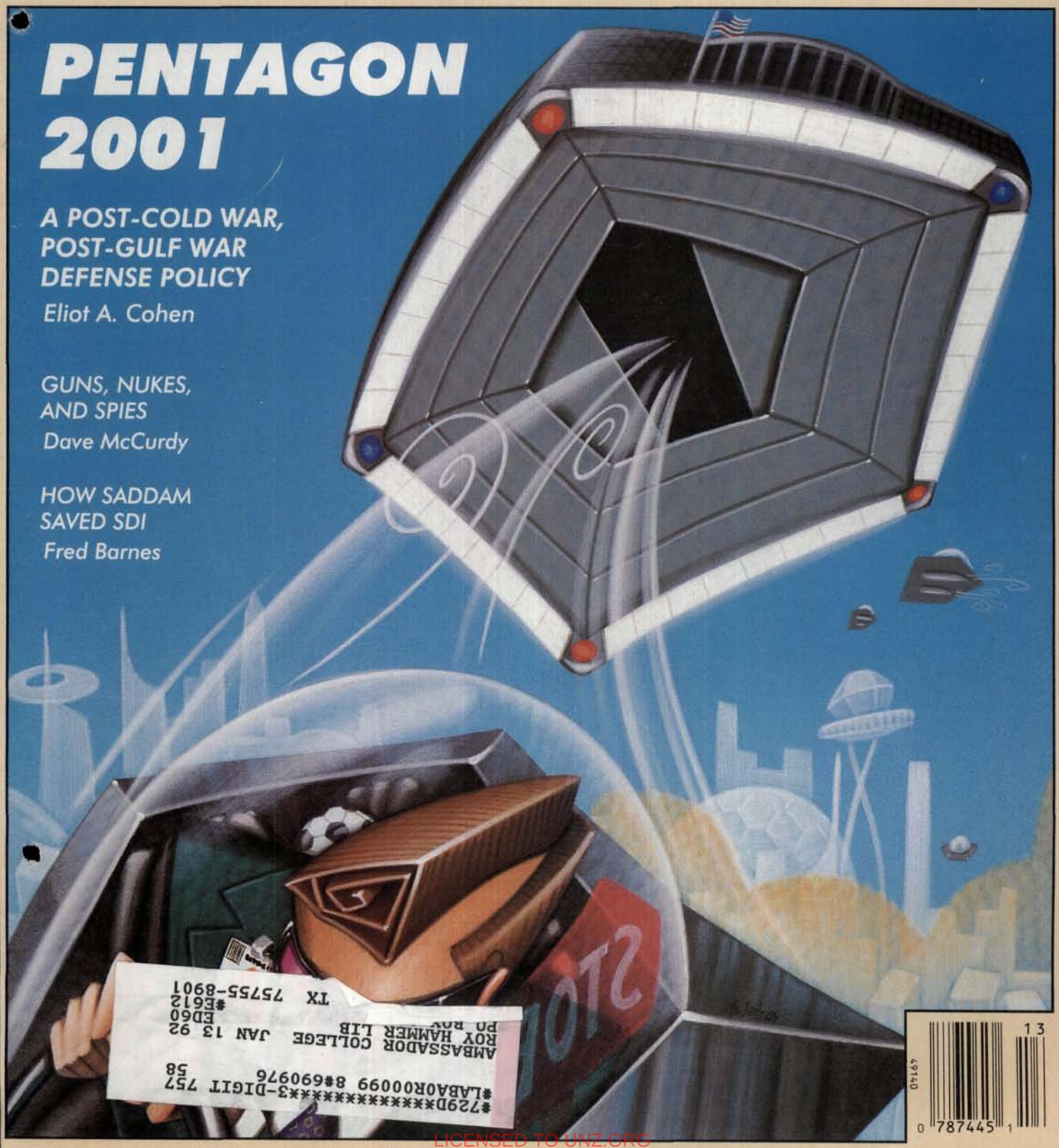

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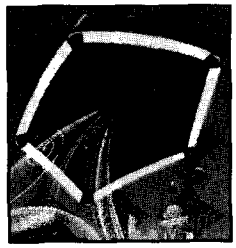

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CORRESPONDENCE

Hollywood squares

To the editors:

Nicholas Lemann's thoughtful review of my book *The Power and The Glitter* ("Entertainment Industries," March 18) implies that I attribute the growing trivialization of our elections—what Mr. Lemann refers to as the Hollywoodizing of American politics—to Hollywood's influence over Washington. In fact, I specifically reject that argument in the book: "Hollywood," I wrote, "has not trivialized American politics; politicians, their consultants, the disengaged public, and the inexorable demands of television for abbreviated debate have trivialized American politics."

What I argue is that Hollywood figures have been emboldened to take more aggressive political roles as campaigns grow more trivial and more overtly stage-managed for television—a process that many in Hollywood view as blurring the lines between entertainment and politics. Many activist stars say they speak out because politicians are too obsessed with raising money and posturing for the evening news to be trusted to deal with important issues. In other words, some of the stars—and producers and writers—consider themselves more serious about politics than the politicians, an attitude often vividly apparent to the Washingtonians who come out to Hollywood looking for money and instead find themselves receiving lectures on morality from sitcom producers.

RONALD BROWNSTEIN
Los Angeles, California

Trade-off

To the editors:

In Michael Kinsley's call for "Unilateral Disarmament" in the trade war (TRB, March 4), he omitted one of the benefits of the United States removing its trade restrictions: the gain to U.S. industries that produce goods for export. Export industries would find it easier to sell their goods abroad—even if other countries didn't follow our example and reduce their trade barriers.

Reducing U.S. trade barriers would cause the dollar to fall relative to foreign currencies. To use Mr. Kinsley's example, if U.S. firms were free to buy Japanese computer screens, they would supply more dollars and demand more yen in the market for foreign exchange. This would drive down the dollar relative to the yen. With a depreciated dollar, U.S. export industries would find their products more competitive in world markets. In the end, removing U.S. trade restrictions would mean both greater imports and greater exports for the United States.

N. GREGORY MANKIW
Cambridge, Massachusetts

The writer is professor of economics at Harvard University.

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War paths

To the editors:

Regarding Jacob Weisberg's plan to rotate divisions with draftees ("A Slight Draft," March 11): one can, as he says, induct and train a person in four months. But in order to rotate divisions, a longer training period is necessary, since one must train a soldier not only in small-unit skills and tactics, but also in working with larger units. Judging by my experience in World War II, about six months is necessary to retrain and replace individuals in the field, and a year and a half to two years for whole divisions.

JOHN R. SAILOR
Queen Anne's County, Maryland
(via 900 number)

To the editors:

The crux of Jacob Weisberg's argument—that a disproportionate number of underprivileged people are carrying the burden of war for the rest of us—seems to be a major concern in academia. As an ironic twist to this, Mr. Weisberg notes how few military personnel come from Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and others of what he calls the country's "elite" institutions. Perhaps this is because of the stigma that faculties at these universities have placed on military service. When I was an undergraduate at Harvard from 1985 to 1989 I attended ROTC classes at MIT, since ROTC had been kicked off the Harvard campus as a result of 1960s anti-war sentiment. Even with ROTC gone from Harvard, the faculty there now seems on the verge of banning students from using ROTC scholarships to pay Harvard tuition. This proposed ac-

continued on page 45

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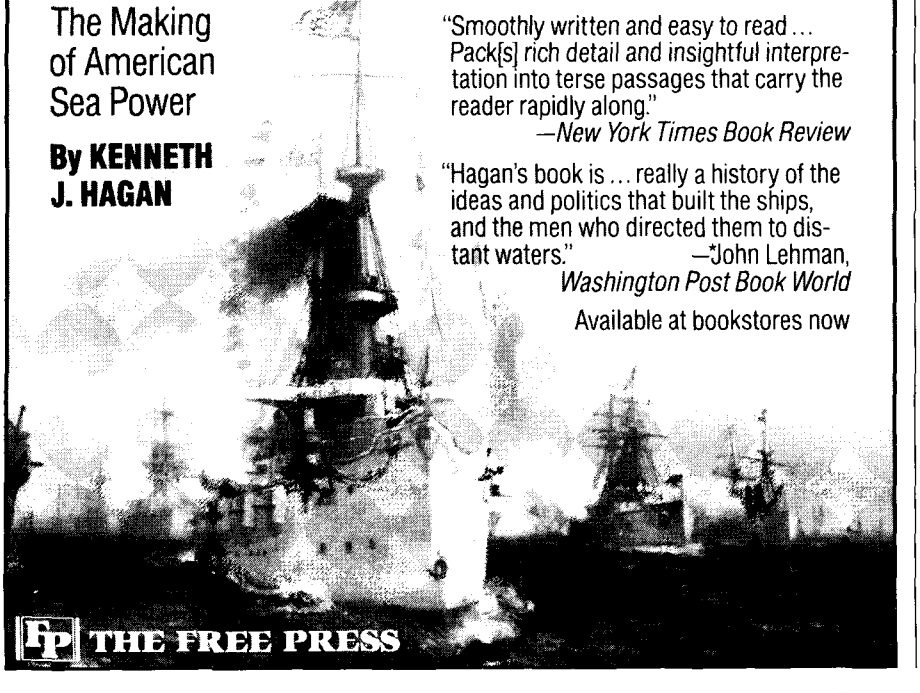

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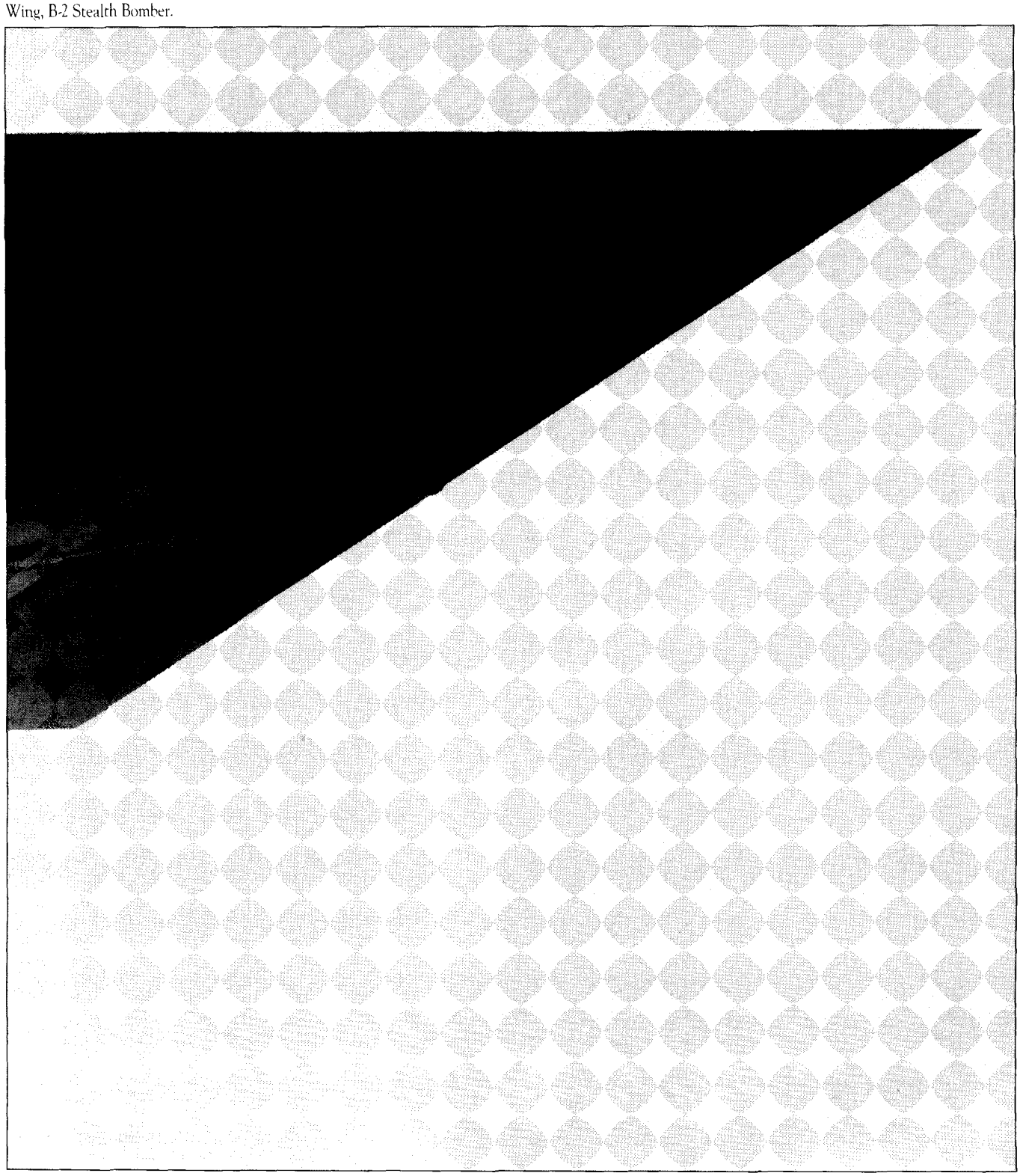

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TRB®

FROM WASHINGTON

Holy guacamole!

Opponents of a free trade zone with Mexico, as proposed by the Bush administration, cannot make the usual protectionist complaint about the absence of a "level playing field." The whole idea of a free trade agreement, like the one signed three years ago with Canada, is to level trade barriers on both sides to zero. Since Mexico is currently more protectionist than the United States, more leveling would go on south of the border than north of it.

Nor can poor Mexico, with a per capita income one-tenth of ours and a manufacturing trade *deficit* with the United States, be vilified, the way Japan is vilified, as a calculating monster out to suck our economic life's blood one industry at a time. Instead, the argument is nearly the opposite: Mexico is too primitive and impoverished to join a North American free trade zone like the European Common Market (or, for that matter, like the fifty-state free trade zone called the USA). Mexico has Third World wage levels, worker regulations, environmental standards. Unrestricted competition with such a country, the case goes, will destroy American jobs and drag the U.S. economy down to Mexico's level.

The case is wrong. As a simple matter of mathematics, it is impossible for a nation to become poorer by buying the products of cheap foreign labor. Average hourly compensation in 1989 for U.S. workers was $14.31; for Mexicans, $2.32. The difference: $11.99 an hour. But even assuming, incorrectly, that American and Mexican labor are equally skilled and productive, there is no national advantage to be gained in barring imports from Mexico. If labor is available for $2.32, paying $14.31 instead doesn't create an extra $11.99 of wealth. It creates nothing. That extra $11.99 is drained from the rest of the economy.

To illustrate the absurdity of saving jobs in this manner: the U.S. economy could buy the products in question from Mexico, pay the Americans thereby thrown out of work $10 an hour to do absolutely nothing, and still be $1.99 better off.

Of course, President Bush is not proposing to pay anyone $10 an hour not to work. He wants to reap the overall social benefit of unrestricted trade with Mexico without worrying about the costs to some individuals who lose their jobs or face downward pressure on their wages. These will be precisely the sort of people already suffering from the general U.S. trend toward greater income inequality.

There are mitigating factors. A trade pact will create jobs as well, by opening up Mexico to American exports and by giving Mexicans more dollars to spend. Many of the consumers who benefit from access to goods produced by cheap Mexican labor will also be poor: buyers of clothes, shoes, food, and so on. Nevertheless, common sense as well as fairness dictates that some of that $11.99 an hour we save by buying Mexican instead of American ought to be spent on training American workers to do jobs that Mexicans can't. Contamination from Mexico will not cause the United States to slide into a Mexican standard of living. What will do so is failure to make sure that our own labor is genuinely more valuable.

And speaking of fairness, doesn't fairness to Mexicans deserve some consideration as well? The AFL-CIO argues nonsensically that a free trade pact will destroy jobs and reduce wages in the United States, but will not create jobs or raise wages in Mexico. In fact, every job lost by an American will go to a Mexican who is poorer and more desperate.

Opponents of the pact argue that to import the products of labor at wages no American would tolerate is to implicate the United States in immoral exploitation. And no doubt there is some low level of pay or depravity of working conditions, approaching slavery, to which this analysis correctly applies. But many Mexicans are thrilled to find work for $2.32 an hour or even much less, and you would be thrilled too given their alternatives, such as starvation. Piously denying Mexicans such jobs does nothing to improve the alternatives.

Improved economic opportunity in Mexico could greatly reduce illegal immigration into the United States. This is true even though the gap in living standards will remain enormous in any event. Emigration is an economic decision and, like all economic decisions, it is made at the margin. At any given time, the vast majority of Mexicans have decided *not* to steal across the border. The ones who head north are those for whom things have gotten just bad enough. Slight improvements, therefore, could change the calculation for many.

The environmental case against free trade with Mexico muddles two questions. One is the effect of Mexican industry, especially near the border, on the U.S. environment. Clearly the United States is within its rights to use any leverage available to prevent Mexican factories from polluting the environment on our side of the border. This has nothing to do with whether the plants in question are making goods for export to the United States.

The second question is whether Mexico's lower environmental standards for itself amount to unfair competition, leading to inevitable erosion of our own standards. The answer is not necessarily. It makes perfect sense for a poorer country to have lower environmental standards than a richer one. Clean air and water are luxury goods; you can afford more of them as you advance. The United States didn't have today's environmental standards during the Industrial Revolution, when we were as poor as Mexico is now, and if we had we wouldn't be as rich as we are today. The same is true, to some extent, of worker health and safety standards. If lower standards enable Mexico to, in essence, take on some of our dirty work, it can be a good deal for both societies.

On the other hand, there is a problem in an era of global capital mobility. Government regulation, to work, must be a monopoly. But manufacturers can play governments off against one another, by threatening to move. As a result, two societies can find themselves with lower environmental standards than either might wish to have. It therefore makes sense for countries like Mexico and the United States to negotiate certain minimum shared environmental standards—lower than those in the United States—and a free trade pact is no better or worse an occasion than any other.

Protectionists like to say that free trade ideology is a hangover from the period after World War II. When the giant American economy dwarfed all its competitors, they say, it was easy for Americans to support competition without trade barriers. Life is different now. But compared with Mexico, the United States is still a mighty giant. All the warnings about being dragged down by poverty-level wages, etc., now made about trade with Mexico, could have been made (probably were made) in the 1940s about trade with Europe.

It's not the 1940s anymore, and we all have our private moments of doubt about whether the United States is fit any longer to compete against a rival like Japan. But must we really shy away from competition with *Mexico*?? Pathetic, if so.

MICHAEL KINSLEY

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

APRIL 1, 1991

NOW, GOVERN

Late at night in the Oval Office, George Bush may contemplate the bust of Theodore Roosevelt. When Mr. Bush entered the White House he surrounded himself with pictures and statues of the patrician warrior. Now, after his famous victory, he may be forgiven for seeing himself as the Rough Rider's heir. He sits astride public opinion like a conqueror. Winning the splendid little war against Iraq has vaulted him to an incredible 91 percent approval rating in the polls. His triumph has created the moment of greatest opportunity for his presidency. But the end of the hundred hours' war finds him at the bottom of his San Juan hill, unwilling to dismount and face the home front.

On March 6 the president addressed a joint session of Congress. The laurels of victory he chose for himself had been lifted from the brow of the Democratic tradition: "This is a victory for every country in the coalition and for the United Nations, a victory of unprecedented international cooperation and diplomacy. . . . It is a victory for the rule of law and for what is right." Thus did the president crown himself a liberal internationalist.

Throughout the crisis Mr. Bush had demonstrated an ability to advance his cause by pragmatic means, casting aside without any second thoughts some of the most cherished right-wing dogmas of the 1980s. In the Reagan period unilateralism in foreign policy had been upheld as an ideal. Collective security and the United Nations were ritualistically abused as the evasions of a discredited liberalism. During his campaign for president, Mr. Bush frequently lambasted Michael Dukakis for his inclination toward multilateralism. "This is no time to turn it over to the United Nations," he shouted at rallies. Now realism dictated another course for Mr. Bush. And the end of the cold war made possible the unanimous vote of the permanent members of the U.N. Security Council approving the use of force against Iraq.

The old ways of seeing things, left over from the cold war, made it difficult to grasp what was happening, especially as the political alignments were assuming new and unexpected shapes. But Mr. Bush, in his march toward war, was returning to the values of the old bipartisan consensus of which his father, Senator Prescott Bush of Connecticut, had been a stalwart. If this was not a new world order, it was an unabashed assertion of certain principles of internationalism in a new key. Mr. Bush himself seems unaware of the sources of what he is saying as he tirelessly reiterates a slogan he can't fill out. But the murkiness of his mind is a secondary factor. What's important is the flag he's now flying.

With an enormous political opening widening before him, Mr. Bush, alas, reverted to type as soon as he wandered into the section of his speech on domestic policy.

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He spoke of a crime bill that is really a series of rhetorical gestures and that refuses to acknowledge gun control; an energy program that is a continuation of the status quo; a war on drugs that has already proved its emptiness. These paltry measures inspired the president to evoke Franklin D. Roosevelt's first 100 days, the most transforming period in domestic policy in the twentieth century. "Surely the Congress can pass this legislation in 100 days," George Bush plaintively said. But surely it will not; just as surely, Congress will be forced to cope with much of what Mr. Bush would not acknowledge. His make-believe budget, for example, will be deposited in the circular file by the end of April.

Inevitably, then, politics will return to the claustrophobic, repellent state they were in before Saddam made his appearance. Mr. Bush seems to have forgotten that a few months ago the public was stricken with a crisis of confidence highly reminiscent of the one in the late 1970s. Doesn't Mr. Bush wish for his presidency to escape the possibility of such a recurrence?

His indifference to domestic policy is reinforced by his inert attachment to the status quo of Republican policies of the previous decade. Mr. Bush, who has dispensed with the essence of Reaganism in foreign policy, still presides as the custodian of Reagan's insolvent, neglectful domestic legacy.

DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Not that there aren't other models, even Republican models. He could, if he chose, begin to adopt the approach of Governor Pete Wilson of California, a moderate Republican, who, for all intents and purposes, has thrown Reaganism overboard. Wilson preaches the pragmatic need for "preventive government"—a government that can plan and act to prevent social problems from becoming social crises. California was ahead of the country with its tax revolt, a harbinger of the conservative decade. Wilson's very cautious tack is tightly circumscribed by the crisis of solvency that has hit most of the states, a direct consequence of Republican shirking of federal responsibilities. Still, Wilson's "preventive government" has put California far ahead of the Bush administration.

But Mr. Bush appears to be more concerned with the politics of tactical public relations than with domestic policy. In this, he is following the advice of his blustery chief of staff, John Sununu, who, on November 9, 1990, made the case for doing nothing on the domestic front. "Frankly," said Sununu, "this president doesn't need another single piece of legislation, unless it's absolutely right. There's not a single piece of legislation that need be passed in the two years for this president. In fact, if Congress wants to come together, adjourn, and leave, it's all right with us." Sununu's cynical contempt even for the idea of having a domestic agenda suggests that all that matters for the Bush administration is re-election. There is apparently no problem in the country—not the abjection and isolation of the underclass, not the failure of the education system to perform the job of education, not the grotesquely distorted, inequitous, and inefficient health care system—that is worthy of the president's concentrated attention.

Mr. Bush's postwar agenda is so slight that no one will know or care when his 100 days have passed. Dr. Win the War is being rapidly replaced by Dr. No Deal. Or, if one prefers the Republican Roosevelt, the Rough Rider is failing to show even a glimmer of the Progressive. And how would TR be remembered today if he had been only the victor of San Juan hill and not the advocate of the national parks, corporate regulation, and the conviction that wealth must serve, not subordinate, the commonwealth? "A man who is good enough to shed his blood for his country is good enough to be given a square deal afterward," said Theodore Roosevelt. George Bush's re-election may appear a likelihood in the immediate aftermath of the war, but his chance to put his lasting imprint on his party and the country is wasting. As the troops come marching home, the president's domestic program is confetti.

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NOTEBOOK

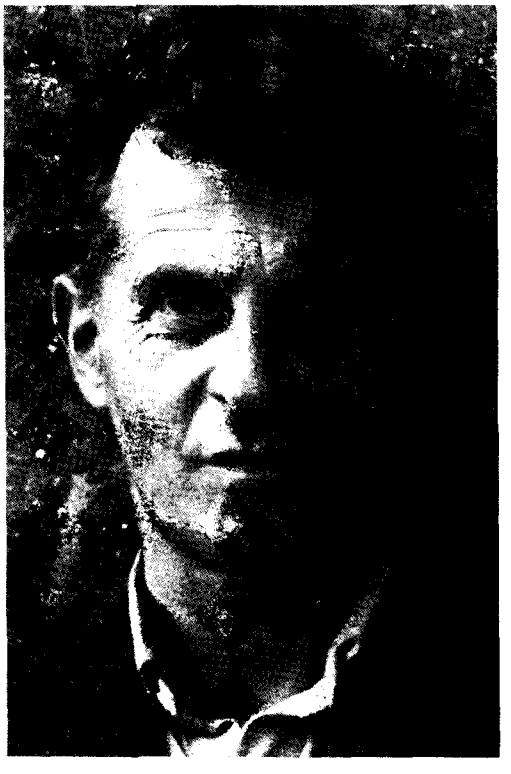
PARTY LINE: This week the editors, on the preceding two pages, excoriate the Bush administration for what we regard as its total lack of a domestic policy. Do you agree—or have we got it wrong? Readers are invited to register their views on our Sound Off line, 1-900-726-6671. Watch this space for results two weeks hence. . . . The poll question from two weeks ago asked whether even after the coalition victory against Iraq, the removal of Saddam Hussein from power should be an objective of U.S. policy. The results were almost as one-sided as the war: 89 percent said yes, only 11 percent said no.

KISS AND TELL: There appeared on page 21 of last week's issue of TNR a photograph of a surrendering Iraqi soldier kissing the hands of a U.S. Marine—a common occurrence, apparently, as Saddam Hussein's troops yielded to coalition forces. The image can be interpreted in various ways: as an expression of gratitude, for example, or as a reflection of fear. But a few learned Arabists among our readers have told us of an old Arab saying that puts a somewhat different light on the picture. "Kiss the hand you cannot bite," the proverb instructs, "and pray that God will break it."

GULFBALLS I: Even after the war ended, it managed to sock a few experts where it hurt. As the allies stood poised on the brink of a march toward Baghdad, the received expert wisdom was that it was unthinkable. Why? Because the Arab members of the coalition would balk at the siege of a Muslim city by Western forces. As it happened, only the West balked. According to R. W. Apple in *The New York Times*, "The Saudis wanted to press on, and so did their Egyptian allies." It was the British, the Americans, and (of course) the French who demurred. The Arabs, it turns out, weren't at all fearful of the dismemberment of Iraq. In fact, when the Iraqi people began to do what President Bush had urged upon them—to try "to force the dictator to step aside"—other Arabs were willing to help. Washington, however, wasn't.

GULFBALLS II: WERE WE NUTS?! screams the current cover of *Spy* magazine in two-inch-high letters. Under this, a subhead of three supposed absurdities: "A Tidy, Five-Day Gulf War? Cocaine and Sex Nothing but Fun? $750,000 One-Bedroom Apartments?" Inside—in an article called "What *Could* We Have Been Thinking?"—New York's satirical monthly mocks the idiocy of "real estate, restaurants, "Cop Rock," debt, cocaine, liquid diets, and a one-week war in the Gulf." Well, actually, the

LUDWIG WITTGENSTEIN: THE DUTY OF GENIUS
A BIOGRAPHY BY RAY MONK



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ground war did last a week, minus a long weekend. But who's counting? We recommend *Spy*'s editors take that weekend off and rest up from the traumas inflicted by ever hazardous two-month deadlines. Why not a comfy three days holed up in a heavily mortgaged co-op with somebody squeezable? We'll wake you up when the war's over.

NOW HE'S GONE TOO FAR:

SADDAM TORTURES AND KILLS PET CATS, DOGS

—*National Examiner*, March 5

AUTHOR! AUTHOR!: We are pleased to announce the publication of two books by home folks. In *The Work of Nations: Preparing Ourselves for 21st-Century Capitalism* (Knopf), contributing editor Robert B. Reich offers a lucid analysis of the emergence of a global economy and the political challenges it presents. In *Germany: The Empire Within* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux) Amity Shlaes, a former TNR reporter-researcher, examines a national transformation already well under way, showing how memories and traditions from various old Germanys are leaving their imprint on the new. ●

WHITE HOUSE WATCH

BRILLIANT PEBBLE

By Fred Barnes

The dates to remember are January 3 and January 18. On January 3 President Bush went to the Situation Room in the White House basement for his first full briefing on the Pentagon's scaled-back version of the Strategic Defense Initiative. The new SDI has a post-cold war mission. Rather than deter a massive missile attack on the United States by the Soviet Union, it's designed to protect against limited missile strikes by countries like Iraq. Bush asked a few small-bore questions, such as whether mini-SDI would bust the budget. Budget director Richard Darman interjected that it wouldn't. Secretary of State James Baker wanted to know how the Soviets would react. He was told they might like the idea, since they face a greater threat of a limited missile assault than the United States does. Baker seemed pleased by the answer. Only Brent Scowcroft, the national security adviser, was skeptical. He asked if the new program—known as GPALS, or Global Protection Against Limited Strikes—could operate effectively from the ground alone. Nope, Pentagon officials said, the space-based part is critical.

Bush quickly approved GPALS. But its chances of gaining congressional assent were poor. Then, on January 18, a Scud missile fired from Iraq was shot down over Israel by a U.S.-made Patriot missile. "It was the first destruction of an enemy ballistic missile in a combat situation," says a Pentagon official. And it gave all missile defense programs an extraordinary political boost. Now Bush stands a good chance of achieving what Ronald Reagan never could: explicit approval by Congress of SDI in its Star Wars configuration, a space-based antimissile system.

For two years SDI took big spending hits. For 1990 its funding was cut by Congress from the $5.6 billion proposed by Reagan (and Bush) to $3.9 billion. For 1991 SDI was shaved back to $2.9 billion, and sharp restrictions were put on how much could go for the space-based part. With the end of the cold war, full-blown launching of Soviet missiles against America became a remote possibility. Full development, much less deployment, of SDI became a remote possibility too.

There were other problems. The program lost its greatest advocate when Reagan left office in 1989. Bush supports SDI, but he's never been as emotionally committed to it as Reagan. Meanwhile, Congress denied the first SDI director, General James Abrahamson, a fourth star (Reagan had requested the promotion). Abrahamson was forced to retire, and his replacement, Lieutenant General George Monahan, ran the program without championing it. Defense Secretary Dick Cheney, always an SDI backer, was obsessed with touting the B-2 bomber. Bush, distracted by Soviet relations and German reunification, took little interest. But his fleeting reference to missile defense during a visit to Lawrence Livermore Laboratory in California in February 1990 was notable: SDI can defend against "attacks from the many other countries that, regrettably, are acquiring ballistic missile capabilities. In the 1990s strategic defense makes much more sense than ever before, in my view."

Civilian officials at the Pentagon had come to the same conclusion. (The military brass, in contrast, generally look askance at SDI.) In March 1989 the National Security Strategy Review reassessed all Pentagon policies. This led two months later to a request for an independent review of SDI. Henry Cooper, who had been the chief negotiator in the Defense and Space Talks with the Soviets, got the task. In the spring of 1990 he recommended that the program emphasize development of a defense against limited attacks. Cooper soon took over as SDI director, and the program began examining the architecture of what became GPALS. Cooper

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and his allies decided that Brilliant Pebbles, the box-shaped satellites that are supposed to orbit the Earth and attack offensive missiles in the launch phase, should be deployed. But fewer would be needed than in the original plan for Phase 1 of SDI.

To combat a Soviet first strike, 4,600 to 6,000 Brilliant Pebbles were required. To cope with a limited strike, approximately 1,000 are needed. Ground-based interceptors were cut back in GPALS to 500 to 1,000, down from 2,000 to 3,000. And a battlefield (or "theater") missile defense capability, a sophisticated updating of the Patriot, was added. This would allow ships to defend against ballistic missile attacks and anti-missile systems to be deployed with American troops overseas.

The land (and sea) parts aren't controversial. Sam Nunn, the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, and other Democrats look favorably on them. It's the space part—not only Brilliant Pebbles but also sensors known as Brilliant Eyes, which guide ground-based missile defenses—that draws criticism. Why? Because if deployed, the space-based elements would violate the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty of 1972. So why are Bush and the Pentagon advocating them? "To have global protection, you've got to have space-based weapons," says a Pentagon official. "They're always in position. If Saddam had a 4,500-kilometer weapon, he couldn't reach the U.S., but he could hit most of Western Europe. Where would you put your ground-based interceptors? You'd have to have them everywhere. The beauty of space-based interceptors is they protect many targets at once. The equivalent protection cannot be done from the ground. Besides, you're better off environmentally and politically having the stuff in space. In space, nobody sees the things."

At the White House the noisiest proponent of space-based missile defense is Vice President Dan Quayle. If Bush's speech in February 1990 was prophetic, Quayle's two months later was clairvoyant. Quayle focused on Saddam, noting that he'd moved Scud launchers to western Iraq, closer to Israel. This, along with Saddam's threats to use chemical weapons against the Israelis, touched off "a new strategic era in the Middle East," he said. "Even if the Soviet 'new thinking' results in new, more responsible behavior, I am afraid the Middle East could well become a much more dangerous place over the next few years."

Once Bush endorsed GPALS, Quayle made sure the president plugged it in his State of the Union address on January 29. At his urging, Bush said that "with remarkable technological advances like the Patriot missile, we can defend against ballistic missile attacks aimed at innocent civilians." Thus, he said, SDI was being "refocused on providing protection from limited ballistic missile strikes, whatever their source." Bush followed that on February 15 with a speech at the Raytheon plant in Andover, Massachusetts, where Patriots are manufactured. As initially drafted, the speech spelled out Bush's rejection of theories, such as mutual assured destruction, that preclude defense against missile attacks. Scowcroft and his staff took out some of this. But Bush did say: "Thank God that when those Scuds came in, the people of Saudi Arabia and Israel and the brave forces of our coalition had more to protect their lives than some abstract theory of deterrence."

Bush now confronts an opportunity Reagan never had. He could push the program to the point where deployment is not only imminent but practically irresistible. "The pro-SDI political climate after Desert Storm will never again be duplicated with the intensity it currently enjoys," says a senior White House official. Fifteen of the nineteen Democratic senators up for re-election in 1992 voted against the use of force in Desert Storm. They may be reluctant to oppose any bill to protect American troops or civilians from missile attack. Still, the White House (but not Quayle) flinched when Republican Senator John Warner of Virginia called for the fastest possible SDI development, even if tests in space violate the ABM Treaty.

To understand White House trepidation, recall January 3. Development of GPALS was sold as consistent with the treaty. Scowcroft was leery anyway of doing anything in space. Baker worried about the Soviets. Bush didn't say so on January 3, but he isn't eager to break the ABM Treaty, annoy Gorbachev, and give Soviet generals an excuse for their own backsliding on arms reduction agreements. Putting SDI on the fastest track can wait. Bush is happy just to have it alive and well. ●

The human face of high-tech war.

HIGHWAY TO HELL

By Michael Kelly

ALONG THE KUWAIT-IRAQ BORDER

Captain Douglas Morrison, 31, of Westmoreland, New York, headquarters troop commander of 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Division, is the ideal face of the new American Army. He is handsome, tall and fit, and trim of line from his Kevlar helmet to his LPCs (leather personnel carriers, or combat boots). He is the voice of the new American Army too, a crisp, assured mix of casual toughness, techno-idolatrous jargon, and nonsensical euphemisms—the voice of delivery systems and collateral damage and kicking ass. It is Tom Clancy's voice, and the voice of the military briefers in Riyadh and Washington. Because the Pentagon has been very, very

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good in controlling the flow of information disseminated in Operation Desert Shield/Storm, it is also the dominant voice of a war that will serve, in the military equivalent of stare decisis, as the precedent for the next war.

In the 100-hour rout, Captain Morrison's advance reconnaissance squadron of troops, tanks, and armored personnel carriers destroyed seventy Iraqi tanks and more than a hundred armored vehicles. His soldiers killed many Iraqi soldiers and took many more prisoner. In its last combat action, the company joined three other American and British units to cut in four places the road from Kuwait City to the Iraqi border town of Safwan. This action, following heavy bombing by U.S. warplanes on the road, finished the job of trapping thousands of Saddam Hussein's retreating troops, along with large quantities of tanks, trucks, howitzers, and armored personnel carriers. Standing in the mud next to his humvee, Morrison talked about the battle.

"Our initial mission was to conduct a flank screen," he said, as he pointed to his company's February 26 position on a map overlaid with a plastic sheet marked with the felt-tip patterns of moving forces. "We moved with two ground troops [companies] in front, with tanks and Bradleys. We also had two air troops, with six OH-58 scouts and four Cobra attack helicopters. It is the air troops' mission to pick up and ID enemy locations, and target handoff to the ground troops, who then try to gain and maintain contact with the enemy and develop a situation."

The situation that developed was notably one-sided. "We moved into the cut at 1630 hours on Wednesday [February 27, the day before the cease-fire]," Morrison said. "From 1630 to 0630, we took prisoners. . . . They didn't expect to see us. They didn't have much chance to react. There was some return fire, not much. . . . We destroyed at least ten T-55s and T-62s. . . . On our side, we took zero casualties."

There hadn't been much serious ground fighting on the two roads to Iraq because, as Morrison put it, "the Air Force had previously attrited the enemy and softened target area resistance considerably," or, as he also put it, "the Air Force just blew the shit out of both roads." In particular, the coastal road, running north from the Kuwaiti city of Jahra to the Iraqi border city of Umm Quasr, was "nothing but shit strewn everywhere, five to seven miles of just solid bombed-out vehicles." The U.S. Air Force, he said, "had been given the word to work over that entire area, to find anything that was moving and take it out."

The next day I drove up the road that Morrison had described. It was just as he had said it would be, but also different: the language of war made concrete. In a desperate retreat that amounted to armed flight, most of the Iraqi troops took the main four-lane highway to Basra, and were stopped and destroyed. Most were done in on the approach to Al-Mutlaa ridge, a road that crosses the highway twenty miles or so northwest of Kuwait City. There, Marines of the Second Armored Division, Tiger Brigade, attacked from the high ground and cut to shreds vehicles and soldiers trapped in a two-mile nightmare traffic jam. That scene of horror was cleaned up a bit in the first week after the war, most of the thousands of bombed and burned vehicles pushed to one side, all of the corpses buried. But this skinny two-lane blacktop, which runs through desert sand and scrub from one secondary city to another, was somehow forgotten.

Ten days after what George Bush termed a cessation of hostilities, this road presented a perfectly clear picture of the nature of those hostilities. It was untouched except by scavengers. Bedouins had siphoned the gas tanks, and American soldiers were still touring through the carnage in search of souvenirs. A pack of lean and sharp-fanged wild dogs, white and yellow curs, swarmed and snarled around the corpse of one soldier. They had eaten most of his flesh. The ribs gleamed bare and white. Because, I suppose, the skin had gotten so tough and leathery from ten days in the sun, the dogs had eaten the legs from the inside out, and the epidermis lay in collapsed and hairy folds, like leg-shaped blankets, with feet attached. The beasts skirted the stomach, which lay to one side of the ribs, a black and yellow balloon. A few miles up the road, a small flock of great raptors wheeled over another body. The dogs had been there first, and little remained except the head. The birds were working on the more vulnerable parts of that. The dead man's face was darkly yellow-green, except where his eyeballs had been; there, the sockets glistened red and wet.

For a fifty- or sixty-mile stretch from just north of Jahra to the Iraqi border, the road was littered with exploded and roasted vehicles, charred and blown-up bodies. It is important to say that the thirty-seven dead men I saw were all soldiers and that they had been trying to make their escape heavily laden with weapons and ammunition. The road was thick with the wreckage of tanks, armored personnel carriers, 155-mm howitzers, and supply trucks filled with shells, missiles, rocket-propelled grenades, and machine-gun rounds in crates and belts. I saw no bodies that had not belonged to men in uniform. It was not always easy to ascertain this because the force of the explosions and the heat of the fires had blown most of the clothing off the soldiers, and often too had cooked their remains into wizened, mummified charcoal-men. But even in the worst cases, there was enough evidence—a scrap of green uniform on a leg here, an intact combat boot on a remaining foot there, an AK-47 propped next to a black claw over yonder—to see that this had been indeed what Captain Morrison might call a legitimate target of opportunity.

The American warplanes had come in low, fast, and hard on the night of February 26 and the morning of the 27th, in the last hours before the cease-fire, and had surprised the Iraqis. They had saturated the road

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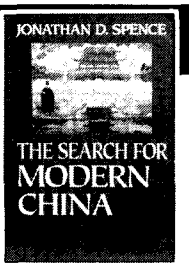

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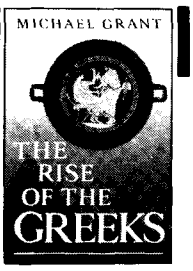

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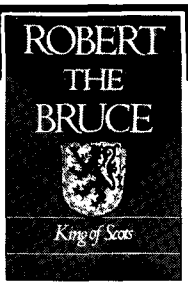

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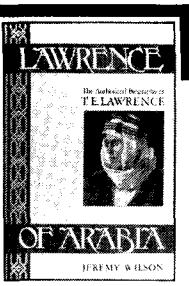

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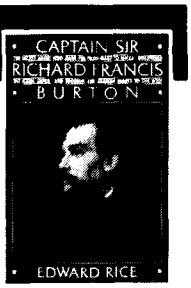

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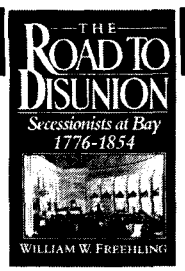

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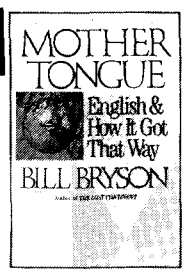

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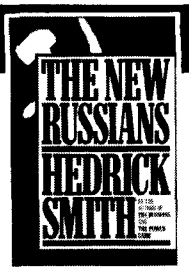

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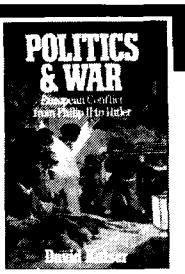

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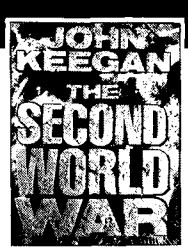

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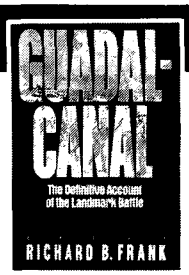

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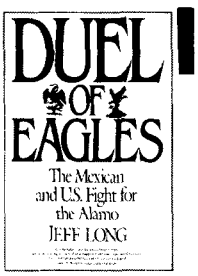

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with cluster bombs, big white pods that open in the air and spray those below with hundreds of bomblets that spew at great velocity thousands of razor-edged little fragments of metal. The explosions had torn tanks and trucks apart—the jagged and already rusting pieces of one self-propelled howitzer were scattered over a fifty-yard area—and ripped up the men inside into pieces as well.

The heat of the blasts had inspired secondary explosions in the ammunition. The fires had been fierce enough in some cases to melt windshield glass into globs of silicone that dripped and hardened on the black metal skeletons of the dashboards. What the bomb bursts and the fires had started, machine-gun fire finished. The planes had strafed with skill. One truck had just two neat holes in its front windshield, right in front of the driver.

Most of the destruction had been visited on clusters of ten to fifteen vehicles. But those who had driven alone, or even off the road and into the desert, had been hunted down too. Of the several hundred wrecks I saw, not one had crashed in panic; all bore the marks of having been bombed or shot. The bodies bore the marks too.

Even in a mass attack, there is individuality. Quite a few of the dead had never made it out of their machines. Those were the worst, because they were both exploded and incinerated. One man had tried to escape to Iraq in a Kawasaki front-end loader. His remaining half-body lay hanging upside down and out of his exposed seat, the left side and bottom blown away to tatters, with the charred leg fully fifteen feet away. Nine men in a slat-sided supply truck were killed and flash-burned so swiftly that they remained, naked, skinned, and black wrecks, in the vulnerable positions of the moment of first impact. One body lay face down with his rear high in the air, as if he had been trying to burrow through the truckbed. His legs ended in fluttery charcoaled remnants at mid-thigh. He had a young, pretty face, slightly cherubic, with a pointed little chin; you could still see that even though it was mummified. Another man had been butterflied by the bomb; the cavity of his body was cut wide open and his intestines and such were still coiled in their proper places, but cooked to ebony.

As I stood looking at him, a couple of U.S. Army intelligence specialists came up beside me. It was their duty to pick and wade through the awfulness in search of documents of value. Major Bob Nugent and Chief Warrant Officer Jim Smith were trying to approach the job with dispassionate professionalism. "Say, this is interesting right here," said one. "Look how this guy ended up against the cab." Sure enough, a soldier had been flung by the explosion into the foot-wide crevice between the back of the truck and the driver's compartment. He wasn't very big. The heat had shrunk all the bodies into twisted, skin-stretched things. It was pretty clear some of the bodies hadn't been very big in life either. "Some of these guys weren't but 13, 14 years old," said Smith, in a voice fittingly small.

We walked around to look in the shattered cab. There were two carbonized husks of men in there. The one in the passenger seat had had the bottom of his face ripped off, which gave him the effect of grinning with only his upper teeth. We walked back to look at the scene on the truckbed. The more you looked at it, the more you could imagine you were seeing the soldiers at the moment they were fire-frozen in their twisted shapes, mangled and shapeless. Smith pulled out a pocket camera and got ready to take a picture. He looked through the viewfinder. "Oh, I'm not gonna do this," he said, and put the camera away.

Small mementos of life were all around, part of the garbage stew of the road. Among the ammunition, grenades, ripped metal, and unexploded cluster bomblets lay the paltry possessions of the departed, at least some of which were stolen: a Donald Duck doll, a case of White Flake laundry soap, a can of Soft and Gentle hair spray, squashed tubes of toothpaste, dozens of well-used shaving brushes, a Russian-made slide rule to calculate artillery-fire distances, crayons, a tricycle, two crates of pecans, a souvenir calendar from London, with the House of Lords on one side and the Tower on the other; the dog tags of Abas Mshal Dman, a non-commissioned officer, who was Islamic and who had, in the days when he had blood, type O positive.

Some of the American and British soldiers wandering the graveyard joked a bit. "Crispy critters," said one, looking at a group of the incinerated. "Just wasn't them boys' day, was it?" said another. But for the most part, the scene commanded among the visitors a certain sobriety. I walked along for a while with Nugent, who is 43 and a major in the Army's special operations branch, and who served in Vietnam and has seen more of this sort of thing than he cares for. I liked him instantly, in part because he was searching hard to find an acceptance of what he was seeing. He said he felt very sad for the horrors around him, and had to remind himself that they were once men who had done terrible things. Perhaps, he said, considering the great casualties on the Iraqi side and the extremely few allied deaths, divine intervention had been at work—"some sort of good against evil thing." He pointed out that there had not been much alternative; given the allied forces' ability to strike in safety from the air, no commander could have risked the lives of his own men by pitching a more even-sided battle on the ground. In the end, I liked him best because he settled on not a rationalization or a defense, but on the awful heart of the thing, which is that this is just the way it is. "No one ever said war was pretty," he said. "Chivalry died a long time ago."

MICHAEL KELLY is TNR's special correspondent in the Gulf region.

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Glasnost struggles for aim.

HOLD THE PRESSES

By Conor O'Clery

MOSCOW

The Soviet army's attack on the Vilnius broadcasting tower in January revealed the lengths to which Mikhail Gorbachev and his hard-line advisers will go in curbing the power and autonomy of the media, particularly in the pro-independence republics. In Moscow tanks are not necessary. The battle against glasnost on television is being waged by Leonid Kravchenko, whom Gorbachev appointed chairman of Gosteleradio, the state broadcasting committee, in November. A tough, white-haired bureaucrat, Kravchenko has reimposed political censorship and Brezhnev-type news judgments on news and current affairs programs. On March 10, central television devoted most of its fifteen-minute report on the mass anti-Gorbachev rally outside the Kremlin to personal attacks on Boris Yeltsin. Afterward Kravchenko told correspondents: "Television is at the center of the political battle. It's not fair," he conceded, "but it would be strange if state television were to use its huge resources to attack the president."

Nevertheless, it is becoming increasingly apparent that these clumsy attempts at censorship no longer fool anyone, and Gorbachev is faced with the painful fact that glasnost, the one domestic success of his reform program, is now helping to undermine him. The semi-autonomous Leningrad television station, which reaches 70 million people and is seen in Moscow, devoted an hour to the Kremlin rally, and also showed Yeltsin's March 9 speech, censored by central television, in which he declared war on Gorbachev. "Cabinet ministers may ask why they are funding Leningrad television after that," sputtered Kravchenko, hinting at a further crackdown.

Kravchenko has already moved against Radio Russia, the Russian parliament's free-wheeling radio station, which began broadcasting last year, giving listeners six hours a day of Western-type news programs on Channel 1. After Radio Russia reported Western criticism of events in the Baltics, some of it taken unedited from Reuters news agency, an official quoted Gorbachev as asking: "Why do we have to listen to anti-Soviet propaganda?" The Gosteleradio chairman switched Radio Russia to Channel 3, which cannot be heard by the 40 percent of the Russian population living outside big cities.

With only three national television channels serving the USSR, the Russian parliament is currently negotiating with Gosteleradio to establish its own television station, which would start broadcasting on March 31. The new station's anchorman, Yevgeny Kiselev, a 34-year-old former news broadcaster with "Vremya," is one of many prominent journalists who have joined to escape the stifling atmosphere at Gosteleradio. He told me they had to rely on the Kremlin-controlled Communications Ministry for a channel and on Gosteleradio for their license. Kravchenko also has the final say on the number of hours they will be allocated, but he has so far hesitated to overrule Russian President Boris Yeltsin, who has committed $30 million in hard currency to the project. "There can only be a real crackdown on glasnost if the Russian parliament is dissolved, and this is a farfetched idea. They dare not do that," said Kiselev, who believes that "the situation we are living through isn't just a crisis of glasnost, it's a crisis of the system. The old Communist regime is gasping for life and tries to crush glasnost."

Though Gorbachev has had considerable success thus far against the broadcast media, he cannot muzzle the print press as easily as in the old days, when the Communist Party or Party-approved bodies controlled every newspaper. *Pravda* (Truth) and *Sovetskaya Rossia* (Soviet Russia) are still under the control of the Communist Party, but other mass circulation newspapers have loosened their ties with the Party or severed them completely. One of the most outspoken dailies, *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, formerly the organ of the Communist Youth League, the Komsomol, is now jointly published by the Komsomol and the newspaper's work collective. Its headline on the Baltics crisis read, GOODBYE LEGAL STATE, and it mocked Gorbachev about his insatiable appetite for decrees. *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Literary Gazette), once the mouthpiece of the official Writers' Union, broke away last year to become, as its masthead declares, a "Free Tribune of Writers," owned and published by its work collective. The pro-reform color magazine *Ogonyok* (Little Fire) has become the property of its staff, and *Argumenti i Fakti* (Arguments and Facts), another outspoken journal with the USSR's largest circulation (23 million), has parted from its former publisher, a Party-approved lecture bureau called Znanie (Knowledge). Perhaps the cheekiest of the self-controlled newspapers is *Moskovsky Komsomolets* (Moscow Komsomol Member), which relegated the news of President Gorbachev's Nobel Prize, awarded last October 15, to page three, below the fold. In the old days all Soviet newspapers would have carried the same version of this story, drafted by the Party's Central Committee.

New, independent newspapers have begun to elbow their way into the market. Sixty journals were launched last year after the passing of the press law, and forty-five of them have flourished to become even more outspoken critics of the president and the Party. The business weekly *Commersant* (Businessman) splashed the headline IS THIS ANY WAY TO RUN A COUNTRY? over its lead story about the abolition of high-value banknotes. The story said: "The reform is virtual highway robbery. The

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state in the person of the president essentially ordered its citizens to pay for its incompetence and economic blunders." Such a comment would have been unthinkable in even the early days of glasnost, when political articles in every newspaper had to be passed by Glavlit, the State Censorship Board, now abolished, and when political analysis, not to mention criticism of the Communist Party leader, was impossible.

However, the state has struck at the press where it still exercises some control. *Izvestia* (News), the USSR's main evening newspaper, has achieved a high degree of professional independence, but its proprietor, the Supreme Soviet, recently recommended the sacking of deputy editor Igor Golembiovsky after he added his signature to a protest against the army action in Vilnius that said: "We appeal to reporters and journalists—if you lack courage or opportunity to tell the truth, at least abstain from telling lies. Lies will fool no one anymore." The work collective at *Izvestia* threatened a strike if Golembiovsky was removed, and a stalemate has resulted.

The struggle at *Izvestia* has left Moscow journalists full of foreboding. Lidiya Kalinina of *Domostroi* (Household) says: "We have no censorship now, but the main body of people working in the media are conformists whose views will change with the prevailing wind." Vyacheslav Shostakovsky, a founder of the pro-reform Communist Party faction Democratic Platform, forecast at a conference of liberals in Moscow on February 5 that after the unfavorable world reaction to events in Vilnius, future turns to the right would be more subtle. "For example, the government may not suddenly begin closing all independent newspapers," he said. "They will just create conditions that will make it difficult for the papers to publish."

Intentionally or not, the government may already have begun this process, by raising the price of paper, printing, and delivery. This has forced newspapers to increase the price they charge readers, and they are losing circulation. Not surprisingly, staid Party papers

Untruth

For the better part of the past year I have sat in my Princeton office every day at one o'clock and watched "Vremya," the nine p.m. news broadcast on Soviet television. The university has a dish antenna that tracks the satellite relaying a signal to eastern Siberia. This has been out of service lately "for repair," but we still get the program via a tape network.

"Vremya" (Time) has no close competitors as the daily source of news for the average Soviet citizen. Since the advent of glasnost it has been regarded as a social gaffe to telephone an acquaintance between nine and ten at night. Why exactly it has remained so popular is difficult to say, since even in its former, more "liberal" incarnation (i.e., when the program actually used glasnost to present views opposing those of Gorbachev) it carried mind-numbing stretches of visual boilerplate. The visit of a foreign dignitary was good for at least a quarter of an hour: the plane arrives, the VIP emerges, is greeted at the bottom of the stairs, walks to the microphones, listens to the welcoming speech, delivers the usual remarks, walks down the line of those out to receive him, gets into his limo, and drives away, the camera lingering on the friendly waves of those remaining behind.

If the government was intent on gaining his goodwill, every visiting foreign official, no matter how minor, was shown seated at the same long table behind the same bottles of mineral water beaming at the same Gorbachev or at his then prime minister, Nikolai Ryzhkov. The voice-over covered the complete rank of every figure in view, spelling out in indefatigable detail all those names usually reduced to acronyms: *Soyuz sovetskikh sotsialisticheskikh respublik*, and so on, instead of USSR.

However, early on one developed the sort of alert inattention required to wait out this stuff, and the wait paid off. During this heroic period of glasnost, roughly up until the last quarter of 1990, "Vremya" was the most mesmerizing television I have ever seen, surpassing even the Army-McCarthy hearings. I watched, for instance, the meetings of the Supreme Soviet when Gorbachev was still presiding over it and Andrei Sakharov was exasperating him (and most of his fellow delegates) by playing the role of national conscience. At one meeting, when it got to be too much, Gorbachev simply turned off the mike.

I was crazy about everything on "Vremya." I felt I knew the newsreaders, each with his endearingly peculiar mannerisms. There was the upholstered, rigidly coiffed matron who looked like an exhibit at Mme Tussaud's Wax Museum. There was a good ol' boy type, who slurred his speech but spoke fluent Portuguese with a guest one day. There was one aging but still handsome athlete who hummed when he had to shift his eyes from the teleprompter to the sheet of paper in his hand.

And all of them, without exception, blundered over and over in one hilarious way. Near their right hand is a button that they must press to turn off their mike when switching to a remote. When the camera returns to them, they must press the button again in order to be heard. They all forgot the button at least once a broadcast and delivered the news in pantomime until someone yelled at them to press the button. In all the time I have been watching "Vremya," no one has found a solution to this technical problem, and I hope they never do.

But that was then. These days "Vremya" is not even TV-of-record. It is simply an organ of the state apparatus. They have lost more than the button. They have lost the truth. And I suspect they have lost a large part of a formerly trusting audience.

The Baltic story is played as the story of frightened Russian-speaking citizens who tell atrocity stories about the civic abuse they suffer at the hands of the Lithuanians and Estonians, who have unaccountably turned into monsters of oppression. A politician named Boris Yeltsin, whose speeches and travels across his immense Russia, some two-thirds of the USSR, were a staple of the old program, seemed for months to have retired from planet earth. But after his spectacular return to television (on another program) to demand

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that changed the least have lost the most. *Pravda*'s circulation has plunged to 3.2 million, 30 percent of its 1990 figure, after a price increase from three to ten kopeks. Since *Ogonyok* raised its charge from forty kopeks to one ruble, its circulation has fallen to 1.5 million, a drop of 35 percent.

Plunging circulation has forced Russian newspapers to become more competitive and, rather than relying on official handouts, to seek their own stories, such as the exclusive interview with Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov published by the trade union daily *Trud* (Labor) on February 12. Under the prosaic headline LET US BE REALISTS, Pavlov was quoted as saying that foreign banks were plotting to destabilize the Kremlin. The story made headlines in the West but was almost totally ignored in subsequent days by the established Russian media, including *Pravda*. One exception was *Izvestia*, which on February 13 cast doubts on Pavlov's claim under the headline BANKERS' RUBLE COUP? On February 20 the liberal *Vechernyaya Moskva* (Evening Moscow) dismissed the Pavlov charge as nonsense under the headline SAD CONCLUSIONS TO A WORLD SENSATION. The same day *Literaturnaya Gazeta* carried a call from economist Stanislav Shatalin for Pavlov to resign. The outspoken *Moscow News* attacked Pavlov with a savage cartoon and a dismissive article headlined RUBLE FANTASIES.

With every blow from the authorities, the new generation of journalists, who cherish their hard-won freedoms, has fought back, sometimes successfully. Interfax, a news agency set up by staff reporters at Moscow Radio's headquarters, was ejected from Gosteleradio by Kravchenko after it had declared its independence; but it managed to acquire new premises and equipment, thanks to intervention from Yeltsin.

The popular television current affairs program "Vzglyad" (Glance), banned by Kravchenko, is taking legal action against Gosteleradio for breach of contract. The USSR Association of Industrial Managers and the Moscow Banking Union have set up a foundation, with "Vzglyad" co-anchors as directors, to fight for

Gorbachev's resignation, "Vremya" has at times devoted more than a third of its airtime to seething denunciations of him. When 40,000 of Yeltsin's supporters marched in central Moscow, "Vremya" showed not a single picture and dismissed the demonstration as "anti-constitutional" and "harmful."

But not even the new "Vremya" dared suppress all visual evidence of the rally that filled the middle of the capital on March 10 and was estimated to be four times the size of the earlier one. Yeltsin was present only as a recorded voice, but now he urged the ouster both of Gorbachev and of the Communist Party itself, going so far as to urge his followers to "raise their fists" and "declare war" on the enemy. While the pictures were being broadcast, the voice-over was a kind of verbal handwringing: "My God! What language! War! Hanging! Shooting! Comrades, are we really going to let them divide us into US and THEM?" In a dramatic tone of despair, the correspondent ended: "OK, then . . . let's destroy everything! Then what . . . ?"

Nearly every broadcast opens with the reading, in ponderously ceremonial tones, of the latest presidential ukase: soldiers will help the police maintain order in the streets; the KGB is empowered to search without warrant and without warning the premises of any joint-venture company and to seize any unlawful equipment or currency. There were barely detectable but unmistakable shifts in the presentation of the Gulf war. Most of the footage came from CNN, but that portion showing civilian damage in Baghdad got the most prominence. Gorbachev's effort to save what he could of his hard-currency client Saddam Hussein was reverently depicted as one more chapter in the Soviet Union's eternal struggle for world peace. But the president was out of town campaigning for his March 17 referendum on the future of the USSR when the sudden collapse of Iraq's Soviet equipment and tactics took place. His oratory all but drowned out the end of the war.

In a way, what Leonid Kravchenko, the new TV czar, has removed from "Vremya" is more striking than what he has added or how he has contrived to manage the news. There was a time when "Vremya" seemed to imitate its now canceled rival "Vzglyad" (Glance), which in turn was imitating our "60 Minutes," intruding its cameras into the peaceful and always implicitly corrupt little domain of this or that hapless official and spoiling his day. Some of the show's efforts, of course, were merely depressing. One featured a festive little street in California, its shop windows bursting with consumerist fantasies, and immediately juxtaposed it with some drab Soviet shop with miles of empty shelves and dead-eyed clerks. The newsreaders all but wagged their fingers at the viewers, practically accusing them of the general collapse.

Indeed, one of the strangest effects of glasnost was to liberate the newsreaders from their mechanical task of mouthing the words in front of them and requiring them to interject their own view of the news they were reporting. This often amounted to nothing more than a kind of tongue-clucking and shrugging: "I think you will agree, Comrades, that much remains to be done in this area. The problem is complex, granted, but you see that others have solved it."

This pointlessly demoralizing element has vanished from "Vremya," somewhat to my relief. But if there are no more stories showing rolling stock full of scarce goods clogging railroad yards because of inept traffic control, there are also few segments that even admit to shortages. Instead one gets some official, notably V. A. Kryuchkov, head of the KGB, denouncing that ancient bugbear and reliable rallying point of the Communists: outside interference. Or if you're lucky, a bevy of worthy old veterans, crinkly-eyed oldsters, full of years and medals and bad advice, offering their solution to the ethnic conflicts in Armenia: "The answer is simple: *Establish Soviet power!* Did our comrades give their lives so that *outside influences* can destroy our Union?"

CLARENCE BROWN

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journalists' rights. Even Kravchenko is not having it all his own way on state television. Broadcaster Vladimir Molchanov evaded censorship and showed footage of the Vilnius violence on his monthly show, "Before and After Midnight," which goes out live. One of Kravchenko's aides was overheard later calling Molchanov an "enemy of the people," and "Before and After Midnight" may be next for the chop.

Perhaps the most memorable act of defiance was staged by Tatyana Mitkova, co-anchor of the popular late news produced by a semi-autonomous company, TSN. She began the bulletin on the day of the Vilnius killings by saying, "What follows is the official version of what preceded the military action in Lithuania, read by Yelena Kovalenko." She then remarked, "Unfortunately, that was the only information from Lithuania that TSN was allowed. We are a state organization, therefore we can only give you the state version." She concluded the news program not with the usual pop video, but with solemn music and scenes of the Baltic countryside. By the standards of Soviet television this was open rebellion, and the program was taken off the air for two days. It was a reminder that in the war over control of the broadcast media, the Soviet state can simply pull the plug on glasnost.

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The case for intelligence.

WHY SPY?

By Dave McCurdy

It took Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait to awaken the Bush administration, the national security apparatus, and many in Congress to the fact that the United States still operates in a world of genuine danger. Though the risk of bipolar annihilation has abated with the end of the cold war, we must still pick our way through a geostrategic mine field. Two major problems stand out: the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the consequences of chaos in the Soviet Union. Both suggest that we still need an intelligence system of the highest possible quality.

Saddam dramatically illustrated the newest threat to American interests: authoritarian, often wealthy, anti-Western regimes that seek to overturn the international order by acquiring nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and threatening their use. The Iraqi dictator paid for his aspirations with the destruction of his army and much of his country. But there are equally determined rulers—in Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, and elsewhere—who also dream of capturing the world's attention by threatening to build or use such weapons.

Public assessments by government and academic experts estimate that these and a number of other Third World countries—such as Argentina, Brazil, South Africa, and Pakistan—all with their own regional ambitions, are embarked on substantive nuclear and ballistic missile technology programs, which, if not arrested, will bring them into the nuclear club by the early part of the next century. Meanwhile, less economically advanced Third World countries will soon be able to develop or purchase chemical and biological weapons on the world market.

As for the other menace to American global interests—the unstable and highly explosive state of the Soviet Union—although we found it possible to cooperate for the most part with the Soviets until the end of the Gulf conflict, there are sure to be future crises where our interests will conflict, perhaps sharply.

The good news is that the Warsaw Pact has been laid to rest, and the potential for a major conflict with the Soviet Union has never been lower. And notwithstanding Mikhail Gorbachev's halfhearted diplomatic ploys on behalf of Saddam Hussein, there does not appear to be any great enthusiasm in the Soviet leadership for significant mischief-making in the Third World.

The Soviet Union's internal political and economic situation, however, is so volatile that the West cannot dismiss the prospect of large-scale social upheaval, a violent crackdown more severe than the one that occurred in Lithuania, and the danger such turmoil poses for the fragile democracies of Eastern Europe. Moreover, this chaos is seen by the Soviet military and secret police establishments as justification for retrenchment on domestic reform. Although defense spending has declined in a number of areas, Soviet strategic nuclear programs continue apace. The Soviet military leadership is also dragging its feet in the Conventional Forces in Europe talks, and the KGB is achieving a new degree of prominence and influence in Gorbachev's inner circle.

Both of these dangers compel us to review the status of U.S. intelligence. Contrary to the arguments of those who say we can now afford to shut down the Central Intelligence Agency, the role of intelligence will be more important than in the past in assessing fast-changing, complicated events across the globe. When I suggested that such a review could lead to the reorganization of our intelligence structure, my Republican (and enthusiastically partisan) colleague Newt Gingrich accused me of trampling on sacred ground. But it is clear from the recent performance of the intelligence community that there is considerable room for improvement.

The CIA miscalculated in both the Soviet Union and the Third World in the past decade. It devoted year after year to assessing the military capabil-

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ities of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact—counting their tanks, troops, missiles, and ships—but we were left virtually in the dark about the actual extent of the political, economic, and societal decay in the Soviet bloc, as well as the speed with which communism would collapse in Eastern Europe. Soviet economists were amazed at the extent to which the CIA overestimated the size and performance of the Soviet economy and underestimated the percentage of Soviet GNP devoted to military spending.

Elsewhere the intelligence elite dramatically misread the course of events in Iran, Lebanon, and China at the time of Tiananmen Square. And we are quickly realizing that even though Saddam was making intimidating noises prior to his invasion of Kuwait, we had little insight from the intelligence community about how far he would actually go. This may have contributed to—although it certainly does not excuse—the nebulous signals the Bush administration sent to Saddam in the weeks leading up to the crisis. And even though the initial reports are promising, we have yet to see exactly how well intelligence performed during Operation Desert Storm.

If we want to know the intentions of those who run the new aggressive and armed states of the Third World, or how Gorbachev and the Soviet military plan to handle civil unrest, or how we can stanch the flow of weapons to dangerous regimes, a new emphasis must be placed on our human intelligence capabilities. At the same time, senior policy-makers at the White House and State Department will have to take a more active interest in the intelligence at their disposal.

More resources should be devoted to recruiting Third World area specialists, particularly those with expertise in the political trends, languages, and cultures of the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. Two experts on intelligence, Bruce Berkowitz and Allan Goodman, have suggested that we also pay much closer attention to the threats to countries undergoing the transition from dictatorship to democracy.

All of this means we cannot simply change the name plates in the intelligence bureaucracy. It means encouraging an infusion of new talent, less preoccupation with the threats of the past, and greater communication between those who collect intelligence and those who use it to formulate policy—in a phrase, more intelligent intelligence.

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A defense primer for the next century.

AFTER THE BATTLE

By Eliot A. Cohen

"Battles are the principal milestones in secular history," Winston Churchill once wrote. "Modern opinion resents this uninspiring truth. . . . But great battles, won or lost, change the entire course of events, create new standards of values, new moods, new atmospheres, in armies and in nations, to which all must conform." The spectacular success of American arms in the Persian Gulf will shape us as a power in international politics for decades to come. It will affect not only the way we think about the military power this nation possesses, but the institutions that create it.

Every major American war has resulted in reform of the military and a transformation of its purposes. In this century the Spanish-American War gave birth to a strategic commitment in the West Pacific and a modern general staff system in the Army. World War I marked the beginnings of American naval supremacy and the creation of our first workable interservice planning system. World War II led to the creation of an independent Air Force and the Department of Defense. Korea bred a military of unprecedented size permanently positioned, in large numbers, overseas. Vietnam ended a more than thirty-year-old system of peacetime conscription, and forged an Army heavily dependent on reserve forces. The Persian Gulf war will leave its marks as well.

Perhaps the greatest test of our strategic maturity will be our willingness to view critically our performance in this rout. Victory has a way of excusing a multitude of sins. Advocates of every weapon, every personnel policy, and every command arrangement will reach for the rhetorical support of an argument that begins, "Desert Storm proved . . ." We must inoculate ourselves against such arguments until the facts are in and yet also be

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open to the possibility that this conflict marks a change in the nature of warfare in the same way the introduction of the tank and aircraft did in the 1920s and 1930s.

Soviet marshals have warned their leaders since the early 1980s of a "revolution in military affairs" brought about by new information technologies as well as long-range propulsion and accuracy. They may be right. If so we need a comprehensive investigation to find out what the nature of this revolution is. A multivolume history of the war and its lessons—conducted in cooperation with, but outside of the Pentagon—is a critical first step in making this happen.

The Pentagon conceived and conducted this war splendidly. Yet we shouldn't forget its peculiarities. The United States had the fortune to have as an opponent a wolf in wolf's clothing—an unambiguously villainous yet maladroit enemy. Had Saddam Hussein taken advantage of any number of openings between August 2 and January 16, he could have made it difficult if not impossible to wage war against him thereafter. The United States fought in a theater ideally suited to our military strengths, an empty desert. Saddam's forces failed to make us fight a house-to-house battle in Kuwait City, where our reluctance to cause civilian casualties and the nature of urban warfare could have made the battle much bloodier. We had half a year to mass and train troops, and to prepare elaborate plans to attack. Had Saddam's men continued to roll south in early August we would have had to fight our way into parts of Saudi Arabia, not just Kuwait. We also had the luxury of one of the best port, road, and air base networks in the world, including military facilities built by our engineers, and the support of a wealthy and cooperative host nation.

Furthermore, the war with Iraq took place at a peculiar strategic and technological moment. We could bring to bear the weight of our cold war-rich armed forces without fear of Soviet opposition in the theater or aggression elsewhere. We attacked an opponent who did not yet have nuclear weapons, modern surface-to-surface missiles equipped with chemical weapons, advanced conventional submarines, or space-based intelligence gathering systems. It detracts nothing from the valor and skill of American soldiers to say that in retrospect this war looks like the battle of Omdurman in 1898, when an Anglo-Egyptian force numbering some 25,000 smashed a dervish force more than twice as large. In that battle Sir Herbert Kitchener's forces took fewer than fifty dead and slew some 10,000 of the enemy: roughly the casualty ratio here. A year later, however, the British met a "Third World" opponent—the Boers—who knew how to handle modern military technology, and the result was very different. It is unlikely that we will find ourselves in that position anytime soon, but the tale is a cautionary one. We need to understand in detail why Desert Storm succeeded so well, and to what extent we can draw lessons from it.

A transformation of American strategy was under way in any case, because of the end of the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union as a conventional (though not as a nuclear) military power. For forty years our national security establishment has had the strategic assumptions of the cold war hard-wired into its organizations and habits of mind, and this makes our adjustment to change slow and difficult. From now on our strategic position will certainly be good—we are the only superpower, as the saying goes—but our environment will be uncertain. As Samuel Huntington puts it, the world will likely "lack the clarity and stability of the cold war and be a more junglelike world of multiple dangers, hidden traps, unpleasant surprises, and moral ambiguities." It will be a world not of "good guys and bad guys," but of "gray guys." Religious and ethnic passions, economic dislocation brought on by the decay of the world trading order and demographic pressures, the loss of a steady bipolar world order—all these shifts suggest that the United States will need to rethink, in a fundamental way, the kind of military that it wants.

We have been in this position before. In 1938 George C. Marshall, then assistant chief of staff of the Army, addressed the Air Corps Tactical School:

> With us, geographical location and the international situation make it literally impossible to find definite answers for such questions as: Who will be our enemy in the next war; in what theater of operations will that war be fought; and, what will be our national objective at the time?

Marshall thought the solution straightforward: "a conservatively balanced force" to protect the United States while it mobilized to meet any challenge that might emerge. And this strategy is very much that proposed by the Bush administration and envisaged under the new command array proposed in recent congressional testimony by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Colin Powell. It differs only in that it would keep a large standing military establishment and rely less on rapid mobilization than during the interwar period, although more than it has during the cold war. Just as Marshall wanted to keep the embryonic Army Air Forces from thinking they would have an unduly large or independent role in the conduct of future wars, the Pentagon wants to trim all of our forces over the next five years, cutting the Navy less, the Army more. The basic elements of American deployment would remain unchanged, including large forces stationed in Europe and the Pacific.

After the Persian Gulf war, the case will be made that the new model armed forces could, with an effort, replay Desert Storm, and that will be its major justification. But it is not self-evident that we will want forces to replay Desert Storm. And the smaller defense budgets that we now plan may leave us without the wherewithal for prolonged large-scale deployments.

The new defense budget debate will focus, as such debates usually have, on the aggregate size of the different services and on the question of what equipment (and how much of it) to buy for them. These customary questions, however, may not be the important ones.

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It's just as important, for instance, to ask about the nature of a force so dependent on reservists. The Army sent some of its armored and mechanized divisions to the Persian Gulf without the brigades from the National Guard that should have made up a third of its combat punch. After weeks of special training one brigade had its commanding officer relieved, another had scores of soldiers going absent without leave. Neither was ready for high-intensity combat. The reserves also may face a recruiting and retention crisis after the war if reservists and their families feel that the emotional and financial hardships of one war are enough.

Some of the most important issues are not directly budget-related at all. Foremost among these are the new command arrangements that the Pentagon reportedly wants. In a move that originated with General Powell, we may soon begin one of our largest postwar military overhauls. Currently our forces are trained and administered by the armed services and then assigned to a command that controls them in war; the services make the tools, as it were, and the command decides how to use them. Most of the commands are geographic entities, such as Central Command, which has responsibility for the Persian Gulf region and Indian Ocean; some commands, however, are functional, such as Strategic Air Command, which controls intercontinental ballistic missiles and most of our long-range heavy bombers. Each command is headed by a commander in chief (known in military jargon as a "CINC"), and the power of these generals has grown steadily over time, to include participation in the creation of defense budgets. Powell's new plan—not yet formally unveiled—would sharply reduce the number of operational commands, creating four war-fighting organizations (the Atlantic, Pacific, Contingency, and Strategic Commands) and supporting organizations, dealing with space, transportation, mobilization, and research and development. The Pentagon prefers, at the moment, to speak of this new structure in terms of "forces" rather than "commands," but for simplicity's sake, I'll use the more familiar term.

The four new operational commands would be as follows. The Atlantic Command would absorb today's Atlantic, European, and Central Commands. Before the war, the Pentagon assumed that we would keep two Army divisions and three or four tactical fighter wings—100,000 men or more—in Europe. The Pacific Command would continue, with only slightly reduced forward deployed forces in Korea and Japan. The Contingency Command would include the Army's airborne, air assault, and light infantry divisions, and one mechanized division, as well as special operations forces and some Marines and air forces. The Strategic Command would consist of offensive nuclear forces

Check, Please

The Defense Department began its current round of budget cuts by ostentatiously trimming the January 1990 Annual Report of the Secretary of Defense, saving no less than $121,800. This flashy parsimony produced a feeble document that did nothing to explain how the Pentagon planned to cope with the end of the cold war.

The new budget proposals are considerably more serious. Last year the Pentagon was ready to accept a budget decline of 2 percent a year in constant dollars. It's now projecting a sharper decline, amounting to 11 percent this year, 1 percent in 1992, and nearly 3 percent a year in 1993, 1994, and 1995. By 1995 the Pentagon will spend barely 3.5 percent of the gross national product—the smallest such proportion since before World War II.

And all this is quite aside from the direct costs of Desert Storm and the indirect costs of veteran benefits. The reluctance of the administration to issue pink slips to those who have just won battle ribbons may mean that personnel budgets will remain high, even while overall spending continues to decline.

Current plans would take the Army down from twenty-eight divisions to eighteen, a reduction of about 35 percent; the Navy would go from 545 ships to 451, a reduction of around 17 percent; the Air Force would lose ten of its thirty-six tactical fighter wings, a reduction of about 28 percent. These proportions would be reflected in manpower cuts, which again would hit the Army hardest (31 percent), the Navy and the Marine Corps least (roughly 13 percent each), and the Air Force somewhere in the middle (28 percent).

In a speech on the day that Iraq invaded Kuwait, President Bush called for a defense budget that would devote more attention to research and development, rapid deployment, readiness, and mobilization. But it is hard to see how the United States can do all this. The attempt to preserve the bulk of our cold war forces to build greater air and sea lift, to restore the large stocks of ammunition and spare parts expended in the war with Iraq, and still press the development of new military technologies may prove more than the budget can handle. And in fact, the 1992 budget will cut spending on basic military research and development by more than 3 percent in real terms.

One solution might be the adoption of a formula for constant defense spending at a level of, say, 4 percent of gross national product per year. Although well below the cold war average (which went as high as 10 percent), this would enable us to keep sizable forces while investing in the technological edge that seemed to serve us well in the Gulf. A defense budget is a form of national insurance and merits the kind of regular investment that prudent individuals make.

After the cold war we no longer can know with certainty where new threats will emerge, much less size our forces precisely to match those threats. In the absence of a reliable enemy we need a way to ensure some kind of predictability for defense planners, and to provide for our security in what is still a dangerous world.

E.A.C.

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and, perhaps, defenses bred of the Strategic Defense Initiative.

At first blush, this seems like a sensible structure, and yet closer inspection suggests difficulties if the plan takes effect and the United States ends up with a force structure dominated by super-CINCs in charge of these four military baronies. These officers, by virtue of their small number, high visibility, and extensive authority, would become extremely powerful, further crowding out the chiefs of staff of the armed services, who have already had their authority slashed in recent years. It is the normal tendency of theater commanders in chief to worry about the immediate problems before them; this can come at the expense of long-range calculations about the shape of the services, long-run investments, or fundamental changes in ways of doing business. Yet ahead looms a time when long-range calculations should dominate short-term requirements.

The construction of three of the commands appears problematic. The vast geographic scope of the Atlantic Command means that either it will need a huge headquarters staff or it will operate with subordinate commands duplicating the functions of the three current unified commands it would absorb. In the first case the command would be ponderous; in the second, it would simply add an unnecessary layer of organization. The logic of having a Contingency Command serve as an operational command, rather than as a holding pool for the geographic command, is unclear. Presumably the Atlantic and Pacific Commands would be primed to react quickly to events in their areas of responsibility, and would have the kinds of regional expertise required for military operations. Why, in that case, have a large command for military intervention? As for the Strategic Command, its operations would be complicated by the fact that many of the forces that we might use to deliver nuclear weapons should be available for conventional missions as well. With suitable modifications, all of our long-range bombers, such as the B-52, the B-1, and the B-2, could be used to conduct the kind of strategic bombing campaign that served us well in Desert Storm.

It is not clear, under the new scheme, how Caribbean and Latin American conflicts would be handled. Today they would be controlled by Southern Command, which has a kind of regional expertise that a Contingency Command might not have. The treatment of space may pose additional difficulties. The United States now makes extraordinary use of space to collect image and signal intelligence, to maintain high-volume communications, and to allow precision navigation by air, sea, and land forces. In the Gulf war we faced no

Edifice wrecked

Northrop and Raytheon may be happy, but there is one piece of Pentagon hardware that performed pitifully during the Gulf crisis: the building itself. It malfunctioned from the very beginning of the Desert Shield deployment in August. First the air conditioning failed. With the added heat generated by extra personnel and computers in use around the clock, the building's antiquated chilled water lines were unable to cool parts of the Army Operations Center, where the temperature at times reached 90 degrees. And while bureaucrats were sweltering upstairs, their colleagues downstairs were almost drowned. On August 7 a corroded ten-inch main burst, spewing 3 million gallons of water and mud into basement offices, forcing people to slosh around in as much as a foot of fetid backwash. The water gushed through a steam tunnel, swamping the heating and cooling plant to a depth of seven feet. "It was a disaster area," says John F. Irby, director of the Federal Facilities Division of the Pentagon, who estimates that the flood caused $1 million in damage. "And it's going to happen again. If we're lucky, the floods will be shallow."

Perhaps Abbie Hoffman and his fellow mantra-chanting Yippies who tried to end the Vietnam War by levitating the Pentagon in 1967 actually did some damage. The five-sided fudge factory is falling apart. When water isn't seeping up from below, it's trickling down through the world's largest leaky roof. The pressure destroys sections of the asbestos ceilings, which have to be removed by men in white suits and gas masks that look like surplus biological warfare uniforms from Kuwait. Concrete window sills crack, break off, and fall with a thud into the courtyards. Since 1987, when the building's coal-fired boilers were pronounced subject to "catastrophic failure," the building has been heated by rented boilers, parked on flatbed trucks. The electrical system doesn't meet code. The ventilation system spews fresh dirt. Water fountains are home to imperturbable mosquito larvae. Rusted drain lines behind the fountains cause regular plaster eruptions throughout the corridors. The 900-person maintenance staff has given up trying to repair all but the worst of them.

It would be surprising if the Pentagon, approaching its fiftieth anniversary, weren't showing its age. After all, the structure was one of the greatest rush jobs in construction history. In July 1941 Lieutenant General Brehon B. Somervell called George Edwin Bergstrom, the president of the American Institute of Architects, into his office and told him to design a building that would consolidate 24,000 War Department employees spread throughout seventeen facilities. Somervell gave him the long weekend for the job. Bergstrom returned with a pentagonal design, based on the shape of the proposed site on Memorial Drive, adjacent to Arlington Cemetery. When the location was moved farther south to accommodate critics who thought it would tie up traffic and crowd the dead, the designers saved time by sticking with the simple geometric form. Construction began less than two months later, after Congress voted $35 million for the project. The whole thing was finished within fifteen months. At one stage 13,000 men labored on the building, working through the night with floodlights. The final price was $83 million, the first of many Pentagon cost overruns. And in what may have

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attempts to blind or disable our satellites, and our enemy had no access to space for its own purposes. In the not-so-distant future this may change, and the United States may need the ability to engage in military operations in space to achieve the kind of leverage it had in the war with Iraq. In short, rather than being a medium through which military action is supported, space may become a crucial first theater of military operations.

Finally the four-command system appears to be predicated on retaining relatively large forces overseas, leaving aside those that may be required in the Persian Gulf after the conclusion of Desert Storm. Yet will the United States really wish, or even be able, to maintain 100,000 men in continental Europe to defend countries that made minimal commitments to a war waged, in part, to protect their oil? All of the trends are away from large-scale basing of American forces overseas (in the Philippines, for example), and even where host nations do not wish to be rid of the Americans it may be hard to keep ground forces abroad effective. In Germany today U.S. Army forces cannot maneuver freely over farmland the way they did only a couple of years ago.

The new command plan, if that is what it is (and the Pentagon has been coy about calling it such), merits consideration, but its organizational, matériel, and strategic repercussions are too extensive to be accepted without debate. Some reorganization—perhaps an even more dramatic one—is in order. When it comes it must take into account two broad considerations. First, we need to ask what kind of armed forces we want. "Conservatively balanced" forces may not be workable, and a more lopsided organization (Air Force and Navy heavy) may be called for. More important than budget share, however, will be the culture and temperament of the services. The armored and mechanized components of the Army, for example, will need to begin thinking less like a continental force and more like an expeditionary corps such as the Marines. The Air Force, which until now associated "strategic" bombing with nuclear warfare, will take away from the Gulf a new mission—strategic conventional bombing. The services may all have to rethink their approach to planning. Rather than focusing on a set piece global conflict with the Soviet Union, they'll need the kind of free thinking that the resource-poor but schooling-rich armed forces excelled at during the interwar period.

Part of the problem will lie in the application of technology that does not neatly fit current force structures or ways of doing business. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s large parts of the military establishment opposed the long-range cruise missiles that appear to have performed so well in the Gulf. Arms control agreements

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been the Pentagon's first contracting scandal, Bergstrom was expelled from the American Institute of Architects in 1942 for "improper and unprofessional conduct." This apparently refers not to his design, but to a bit of malfeasance having to do with double-billing.

At first Washingtonians found little to like about the behemoth. In keeping with the dictates of wartime economy and efficiency, Bergstrom and his underlings opted for a style of starved classicism, or what has been termed "government international," free of frills and ornamentation. One of FDR's conditions for accepting the new building was that no marble be used in the design. Instead, the perimeter was faced with pale yellow limestone. "Monolithic" concrete was used for other surfaces, giving the whole structure a monumental dinginess. "About the building's exterior, the less said the better," wrote an anonymous reviewer for *The Architectural Forum* in 1943. The writer criticized the building's "vast and boring expanse of windows, cornices, and columns." Since then it has been subject to many putdowns. In *Armies of the Night* Norman Mailer envisaged the Pentagon as the nozzle on a can of antiperspirant, "spraying the deodorant of its presence all over the fields of Virginia."

Admirers of the edifice stressed its rationality, practicality, and size. Like the street plan of Washington itself, the building follows a rational scheme. Concentric rings are lettered A-E; corridors are numbered 1-10; floors are color-coded. Using a simple navigational system, it's possible to walk from one office to any other office in less than ten minutes. In the words of an early promotional volume, "getting lost in the building actually requires a special gift for bewilderment." The book brags about the number of calls logged in the world's largest private branch telephone exchange (225,000 a day), the number of employees (32,000), the miles of corridors (17½), and the quantity of doughnuts served in the cafeteria (2 million per year).

Today the Pentagon has fewer doughnuts but many more holes, and stands in need of major rehabilitation. If Congress doesn't make a fuss, the Pentagon's renovation by the Army Corps of Engineers is scheduled to begin in 1992. The building will be gutted, one section at a time, much as it was built in 1941-43. This time the work will take ten years and will cost a projected $1 billion. Replacing the Pentagon with a new building hasn't been considered, principally for sentimental reasons. "There aren't many buildings that speak," says Jerry Shiplett of the Pentagon's Planning and Development office. "The White House speaks. The Kremlin speaks. And the Pentagon speaks. It's a major thread of the fabric of power." Wouldn't do to replace it with a rectangle now.

Like the Eiffel Tower, the Pentagon has convinced the people who have to look at it and work in it every day that despite appearances, it has a certain charm. In nominating it for national historic landmark status, the Pentagon's former custodian, the General Services Administration, wrote, "The building was constructed to enable the War Department to operate more quickly and more efficiently. It performs that function. At the same time, it is a marvel of ingenious technology, a monument of dignity and beauty, and a fitting expression of the ability and power of the American people whom it serves." After fifty years the old shape has acquired a certain moldering dignity. But beauty? Never.

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have left the United States in the odd position of renouncing the kinds of medium-range surface-to-surface and ground-launched cruise missiles that are weapons of choice for countries like Iraq. In the future our newfound enthusiasm for conventional arms control may deprive us of weapons that would be particularly useful in conflicts like the one we've just finished.

Then there's our system of high command. Over the last ten years we have seen a profound but little noticed transformation of the American military establishment that led to, and gained impetus from, the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. During World War II and thereafter the United States had a system based on a Joint Chiefs of Staff, the uniformed heads of the armed services with an independent chairman, who could offer collective and individual advice to the president. Critics described it, correctly, as a system that often produced pablum rather than clear counsel. Goldwater-Nichols transformed our high command, bringing us, in effect, to a general-in-chief system backed by a joint general staff. In theory the chairman of the Joint Chiefs is not in the chain of command, which runs from the president through the secretary of defense to the theater commands. In practice, however, he is. The chairman controls the large Joint Staff, outranks all other officers, and is the principal military adviser to the president. He is obligated to consult with other members of the JCS only "as he considers appropriate," and is not always required to inform the president or secretary of defense of divergent views about military matters among the JCS. He is responsible for strategic planning, net assessments (hitherto a civilian preserve), contingency planning, and offering budget proposals different from those of the services. His latent power is immense.

The current chairman has used that power to the maximum. General Powell combines political shrewdness and force of personality with the will to exert his powers fully. As a result, he has authority unparalleled in our military history and has exercised it to great effect. One may greatly admire his tenure, however, while worrying about its legacy. A chairman of the Joint Chiefs now has not only legal authority but unprecedented prestige and political power. In Powell's hands, that is fine, but he is clearly the best chairman we have had in two decades. It is not comforting to imagine what a George McClellan or a Douglas MacArthur would do with the power.

Goldwater-Nichols has, furthermore, made the military doctrine of "jointness"—the integrated use of all armed services—an orthodoxy, to be challenged only at hazard to one's career. Jointness is, on the whole, welcome, but like all doctrines it can go too far. The initial plans for Desert Storm, for instance, only envisaged the use of air power to support a land offensive into Kuwait. Air Force planners came up with a more imaginative campaign plan—one that applied air power to targets throughout Iraq, including Baath and secret police headquarters—and sold it to the theater commander. Although tactically joint (it used naval aviation, for example), the air campaign was strategically independent, in the manner of the great air offensives of World War II. And it worked.

It will be a more serious problem if a doctrine of jointness distorts the restructuring of our armed forces. Goldwater-Nichols, for example, mandates that the Joint Staff be composed equally of officers from the three departments (the Marine Corps being included in the Navy), and it is a fair guess that the chairman's new command plan will allocate senior commands in roughly equal numbers to the three departments. Such allocations of bureaucratic influence should, however, correspond more to strategic reality (what kinds of forces we need and want) than to some abstract idea of fairness. And sometimes jointness may not serve our strategic purposes or tactical efficiency at all. Such would be the case if an Air Force officer, for example, hundreds or even thousands of miles from an action, were to control the sorties of a Navy carrier operating independently or a submariner were to direct a counterinsurgency campaign. Professional soldiers are rarely omnicompetent, and the complexity of each branch of warfare has only increased over time.

One happy consequence of the Gulf war is a new confidence of civilians in the military. And it is wonderful to see bonds not only of affection but of respect restored between civilians and soldiers. There is, however, one subtle if manageable danger in all this: civilian leaders may lose confidence in their right and forget their responsibility to determine the shape of military organizations and to probe and query military commanders about their war plans. In these areas (unlike those of military acquisition, where civilian control has been more assertive, if uneven) civilian leaders may yield too much to soldiers, who may, in turn, expect excessive deference to their views. As one great war minister put it, "The more developed the professional sense of an army, the more sensitive and touchy it is to anything which hurts, or seems to hurt, its interests and prerogatives."

The Bush administration's assertions that the generals ran this war probably conceal a more complicated reality. They may also convey the incorrect impression that civilian control of the military in wartime is merely a matter of setting broad objectives and getting out of the way. Our experience in previous successful wars suggests otherwise—and, alas, we cannot assume that we have finished with conflict. If we come to believe that we can make war by aphorism—"only use invincible force," "turn the war over to the military," "set simple objectives"—we will find ourselves baffled by other conflicts into which we will surely stumble. The Iraq war was brilliantly planned and fought, and our armed forces' skill and courage has surely bought us a more favorable, if not necessarily a tranquil, world order. But it is no more likely today than it was on August 1, 1990, that we have fought our last war, and we must think about our defense with that fact uneasily in mind. ●

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BOOKS & The Arts

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Music Makers and Shakers

Oliver Stone says that he first heard Jim Morrison and The Doors while he was serving in Vietnam. That juncture seems almost an epitome for his generation. It's hardly surprising, then, that after making *Platoon* and *Born on the Fourth of July*, he has written and directed **The Doors** (Tri-Star). Even those who are not connected to rock or to drugs (like myself on both counts) can see why Morrison and his group, rocking and drugging, mattered to their coevals. The Vietnam-era young people scorned old acceptances at the same time that they embraced even older mysticisms. To those ideas, add a large portion of sex and you have The Doors. And you have Stone's drive to make a film about them as part of what is already being called his 1960s trilogy.

Those who know earlier Stone films, including *Salvador* and *Wall Street*, may agree that, after Martin Scorsese, he is the most exciting American director. Exciting in more than a fast-action, snap-editing way. Stone's directing excites with its hunger, its avidity, by the way he grabs a scene cinematically, squeezes it of its juice, and casts it aside—even if the scene itself is quiet. That trait, recurrent in his previous work, dominates *The Doors*. He swirls spectacularly through Jim Morrison's life, all the way from boyhood to his early death in 1971 at 27—in Paris. (Morrison is buried in Père Lachaise. Stone shows us the graves of Rossini and Balzac and Proust and such before we see Morrison's grave. Draw your own inferences about the Decline of the West.)

The narrative is thickly contrapuntal with visual motifs and subjective glimpses. After a boyhood experience with Indians in New Mexico, Indian faces haunt Morrison all his life. Witchcraft threads through the story. A recurrent image of an unidentified person lying in a bathtub is clarified at the last. The point of the film is not just to tell the story but to have us live the life. The intricate editing of David Brenner and the lush photography of Robert Richardson contribute a lot to the total effect—engulfment.

The music as such means little to me. The lyrics, insofar as I could understand them (the dialogue, too, is not always comprehensible), seem sheer Haight-Ashbury profundity. But Morrison was wanted. He moved into his career as if it had been waiting for him. It was a life lived at the edge, through drugs and drink and general wildness, as if he had to prove the sincerity of his songs by his personal behavior. He dramatized for his public what they could do only partially, if at all: the dive into the impure with a certainty that the pure lay somewhere within. There's no need to share the Morrison mystique in order to understand its hold, particularly on that generation.

The picture is too long at two hours and fifteen minutes. Some late sequences—quarrels with his group and with his girlfriend, parties, concerts—are almost replays of earlier sequences. What's also somewhat tedious (and I don't say that Stone imposed this on Morrison) is the star's attitude toward himself. It goes past his status as symbol for his public to a view that often infiltrates pictures about rock and jazz stars: the performer as Christ being crucified for his audience. At one point, when a waiting crowd is chanting his name, Morrison says, "They don't want me. They want my death." This attitude, quite different from his plunge into his career, seems only the ultimate star vanity. His early death, like Janis Joplin's, is the lastingly ironic reification of that attitude.

For all Stone's highly charged directing, the film wouldn't come to much without Val Kilmer, the actor who plays Morrison. Stone isn't always on target with his casting—Charlie Sheen in *Wall Street*, for instance—but Kilmer is a bull's-eye. He resembles Morrison, which helps, and he can sing (he actually does the numbers; Morrison himself is heard only in other scenes as background), but there's more. Kilmer is completely authentic in the basic wonderment, the basic near-fright, of Morrison; and he is fierce in Morrison's angers, leonine in his desperation—a sort of rock Nureyev. The role is really *filled*.

Almost simultaneously with the fiftieth anniversary of *Citizen Kane* appears a biography of a chief contributor to that masterpiece—the composer Bernard Herrmann. *A Heart at Fire's Center* by Steven C. Smith (University of California Press, 400 pp., $29.95) is in two respects like Eric A. Gordon's recent biography of Marc Blitzstein. In both composers' lives, the figure of Orson Welles looms large. In both cases, the biographer seems to feel that there will never be another book on his subject, so he includes as much as possible. When Smith dallies over the analysis of one of Herrmann's minor film scores, we can forgive; he is loath to consign any portion of Herrmann's career to the silence that will, not unjustly, follow this book.

As it happens, I had a proprietary inter-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Larks on a String. *This Czech tragicomedy, about the Stalinist 1950s, was finished just when the Soviets arrived in 1969. Locked up for twenty years, it now exercises reticent charm and poignancy. (Reviewed 3/18/91)* **The Silence of the Lambs.** *Sacrifices sense and credibility for the sake of sheer scare, but it does scare. Anthony Hopkins is smoothly bestial. Tak Fujimoto's lighting is exceptional. Most of Jonathan Demme's direction is smart. (2/18/91)* **Superstar: The Life and Times of Andy Warhol.** *Chuck Workman's intelligent documentary, though it goes on a bit, makes this tired subject fresh. (3/25/91)* **The Vanishing.** *A Dutch thriller by George Sluizer. Highly intelligent, fiendishly subtle. We know most of the facts from the start and are still gripped by mystery. (3/4/91)* **—SK**

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est in Herrmann long before he was well known. His younger brother, Louis, and I were in a course together at NYU in the early 1930s and were friends for a while. Several times I visited the Herrmann apartment, which was not far from school, and though I never met Bernard, I saw some of the scores and books he had already piled up, and I learned a lot about him from the adoring Louis. Later, when I heard Bernard conducting radio concerts in the days when CBS had a symphony orchestra, I felt a vicarious fraternal glow. When *Citizen Kane* came along with its superlative score, I let myself feel proud.

Smith catches what many of us felt in those days, that Welles and Herrmann and colleagues seemed en route to the moón, bright spirits of a worried yet fervid decade. Smith then goes on to take us into every nook of Herrmann's career and many crannies of his private life. He is not a notably graceful writer. The title itself would be a bit grand for a life of Beethoven. The fact that it comes from a Spender poem that Herrmann carried in his wallet only suggests the limits of both Herrmann's and Smith's taste. And the text itself has moments of doubtful grandeur.

Still, many more millions around the world have heard Herrmann's music than have heard works by most of his contemporaries. Besides the *Kane* score, he wrote scores for *The Magnificent Ambersons*, eight Hitchcock films, two Truffaut films, and many others. He wrote much other music, including an opera, *Wuthering Heights*, which has been recorded, and a cantata, *Moby Dick*, which I heard but can't remember. He conducted various American orchestras and some English ones, worked hard at composing and arranging and recording, and spent a good deal of his life in anger, often distancing colleagues and friends who wanted to like him. He believed that his anger was rooted in his principles. Possibly it may also have been rooted in envy of some contemporary musicians who achieved the place and the acclaim that he wanted. He died in 1975 at 64, worn out.

It's his film music that will, perforce, survive. Smith concludes his book with the text of an interesting talk on film music that Herrmann gave in 1973. He speaks of escape from the burden of the "orchestra" concept:

> If you wish first to play the music of Haydn at Esterházy, and then to play it in Paris, you have to use the same kind of instruments. But music for film is created for one performance—for that one film—and there is no law that says it has to be related to concert music. As a matter of fact, such an opportunity to shift the complete spectrum of sound within one piece has never before been given to us in the history of music.

Of that opportunity Herrmann made wonderfully memorable use. ●

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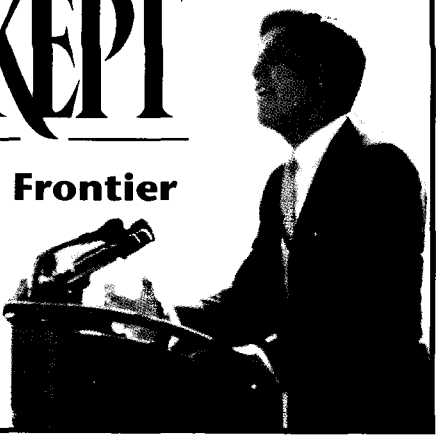

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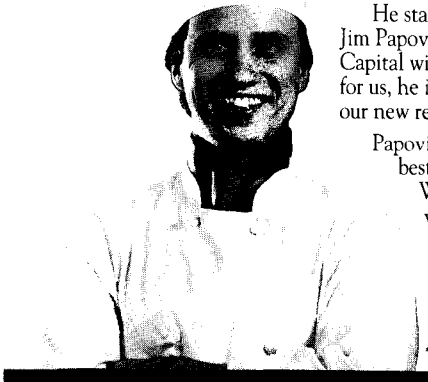

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Caspar David Friedrich, the peculiar Romantic.

The Landscape of Longing

By Anne Hollander

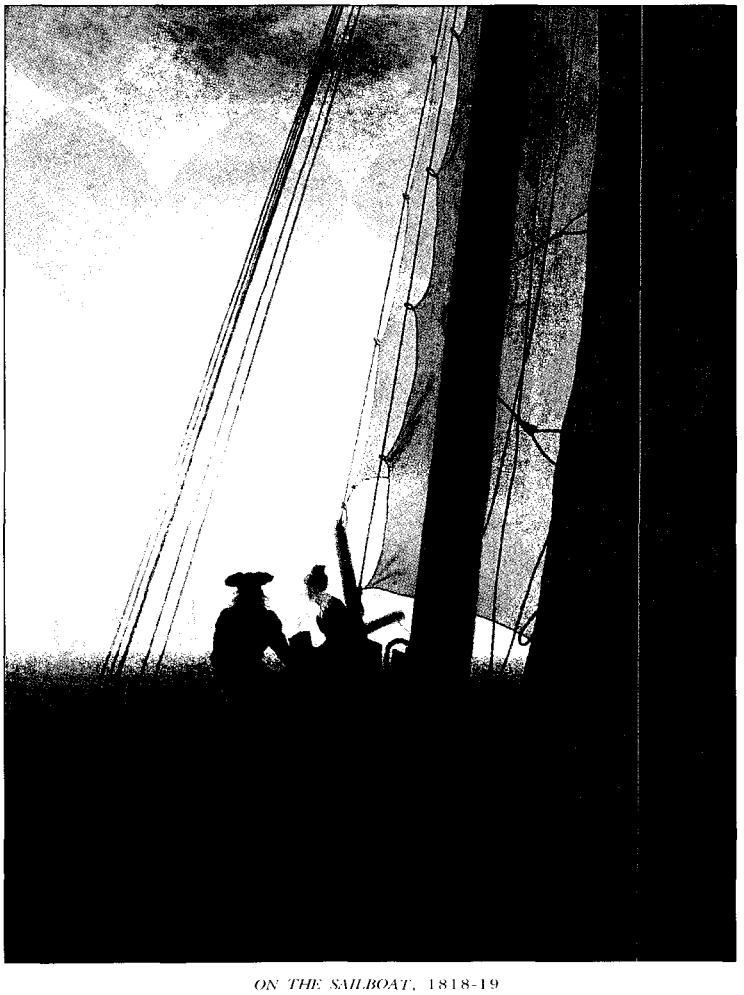
Only nine oil paintings and eleven works on paper make up the Metropolitan Museum's current exhibition of Caspar David Friedrich's works from Russia; and they are only minimally augmented by a few engravings, owned by the museum, which were made by the artist's brother from some of Friedrich's 1803 drawings. Housed far to the rear of the main floor in a small section of the Lehman wing, this show must be sought out, but it is important despite its small size and ascetic flavor. Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840) is now generally acknowledged as a great Romantic painter, and space has been made for him beside Turner, Géricault, Blake, and Goya on the roster of Early Nineteenth Century Originals. Friedrichs are now reproduced on book jackets, record albums, and in other public places, and the pictorially conscious have added *The Cross in the Mountains*, *The Monk on the Seashore*, and *The Arctic Shipwreck* to their mental furniture along with *The Raft of the Medusa* and *The Third of May*.

And yet virtually all of Friedrich's important works are in Germany, with some in Austria and Russia, whereas England, France, and the United States boast just one painting each, and no major ones. The current show offers an unparalleled view of the works now held at the Hermitage and the Pushkin Museum, none of which has ever been to America before, and many of which are not even commonly reproduced. This is, in fact, the first exhibition devoted to Friedrich ever to be mounted in this country. It is possible that many more Friedrichs still lurk in the Soviet Union, unknown in the West, even in reproduction; but for now we are greatly pleased to see these.

They are few, and many are very small, although two of them, measuring about 53 inches by 67 inches, are the largest he ever did. It is also true that none of his most celebrated and popular works is among these, which are less spectacular. Still, they span Friedrich's whole career, and they give ample evidence of his unique quality at every stage of his life, and in the different media that he used. The first noticeable thing about this mini-retrospective is its consistency. Friedrich perfected his method by 1808 and never changed it, even during the period after his stroke in 1835, when he worked very little.

Friedrich never dated his paintings, and he showed none of that obsession with development so common to artists of his period and to others ever since. Apparently he had no need to enact a visible fight for artistic territory, to be seen to be struggling steadily along inside the medium itself, to give perpetual evidence of his personal battle with the intractable eye, the pesky materials, the superior predecessors, the present rivals, with abiding artistic problems and new self-imposed technical tasks, with dominant opinion, with the laziness that gives in to facility, with the stupor that blocks definitive vision and action. Unlike everybody's other favorite Romantics, Friedrich refused to demonstrate the new drama of the painter's work, the phrasing of a personal career in paint.

There are, instead, certain tightly controlled shifts in a prevailing idea that itself is not about painting, although it has to do with art. Friedrich gives the strong impression of being glad to be alone with his preoccupations, eager to satisfy only his inward eye. He is quite free of the artistic self-importance that places itself inside a current idea of the state of painting. Instead he seems bursting with a particular spiritual consciousness that requires illustration; and that's what gives such peculiar intensity to all his works. Packed into these soberly wrought views of various sober subjects is a single concentration, a uniform focus



ON THE SAILBOAT, 1818-19

Anne Hollander is the author most recently of *Moving Pictures* (Knopf).

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that has the same register whether the artist is dealing with gothic ruins in the moonlight or with a local fence or a window in the morning.

It is the very difference among these subjects that makes Friedrich's single-mindedness so uncanny. He was devoted to his native North German landscape around the Baltic port of Greifswald, and to the nearby places where he did his only traveling, and he celebrated them all again and again with his usual concentrated reticence. But he was also wonderfully unafraid of owls and moons, sunbeams and crosses, swans and ships, anchors and towers: the whole warehouse of old spiritual emblems. He found that they would do very well, just as they always had. And he wasn't afraid of absolute symmetry either, which also served splendidly, just as in the Middle Ages, to impose its ancient authority on a seeker's needy eye. In Friedrich's works, a taut new atmosphere is held in place by very old devices.

For Friedrich, the new meaning being discovered in land and light and water, the things Turner was working with so explosively, had to be fused and integrated with potent old emblematic machinery, and so did the casual beauty of homely details. He did not try to look revolutionary by scrapping those old vocabularies, but he clearly did not rely on them either. He made plenty of pictures without any crosses, coffins, or ruins at all, indeed often with nothing but trees, images that are nevertheless tense with the same fateful longing that informs the moonlit graveyards.

With all his unprecedented advances in the spiritual use of pure landscape, Friedrich discarded nothing he inherited from the austere Northern tradition that began in the fifteenth century. This meant that he could help himself to landscape motifs used by Northern Renaissance masters like Altdorfer and Seghers, artists who had already understood the appeal of larch trees seen against the sky, without even having to consider such intervening classic models as Claude. He internalized the Northern pictorial heritage, never needing to repudiate but only to transform. When he presents a funeral among gothic arches and dead trees in murky lighting, everything is offered with the circumspect clarity of Van Eyck, Bosch, and Vermeer. Later in the nineteenth century, other German Romantic painters did insist on overdoing it, as eighteenth-century painters of varying nationalities had already overdone it, exaggerating plain ancient methods for rendering nature with the tendentious theatrics suggested by baroque horror merchants such as Salvator Rosa. Friedrich stayed with the old Nordic school that renders fearful material with limpid modesty.

He was dubbed great in this country and acquired his popularity here, as in France and England, only during the last twenty years, and in Germany only in this century. Having been successful at the beginning of his career, he had already fallen into disfavor by the second half of it, even at home, and was forgotten at the time of his death. He was revived in Germany in the early 1900s and became celebrated, but only there. Some art historians and art lovers outside Germany encountered his works on their travels or in books and fell in love with him; but theirs was a subterranean passion at odds with a hundred years of prevailing taste.

Reasons have been adduced for Friedrich's lack of modern fame outside Germany, beginning with the proposition that the Nazis took him up and so no one else could. But I don't believe that. It might have been true of Böcklin, for example, except that people hated Böcklin not because Göring liked him, but because most of Böcklin is truly dreadful. Friedrich had other qualities that rendered him unacceptable in an aesthetic climate dominated by French ideals of perpetual artistic revolution, of the abiding value of an avant-garde.

The Romantic Vision Of Caspar David Friedrich: Paintings and Drawings from the U.S.S.R.
(The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, January 23 to March 31, 1991; catalog edited by Sabine Rewald, 110 pp., $24.50, $18.75 paper)

Caspar David Friedrich and the Subject of Landscape
by Joseph Leo Koerner
(Yale University Press, 256 pp., $50)

Friedrich's program could not meet the modernist requirements that were applied retroactively to the whole history of art. The fealty of great artists was now seen to be pledged not to academic tradition or to the truth of nature, and certainly not to external political or religious mandates, but only to the inner dynamics of painting itself. Those alone were seen to generate the true spiritual core of great art on any subject, religious or not. Thus the Virgins of Piero, the mythologies of Poussin, and the rocky hills of Cézanne could all appear to have a single spiritual source. Spiritual expression required some transmutation through paint itself, not just by means of the old lexicon of religious terms. Artists of the past with a claim to greatness, whatever their announced themes and known patrons, must appear to have fundamentally detached their artistic selves from the requirements of the church, the duke, or the academy, from everything but their personal responses to the demands of painting when they actually took up the brush. One sign of this was that they would appear especially detached from too careful (usually called slavish) imitations of realistic appearance that might seem intended to make base appeals to sentiment or stupefaction.

Until the 1960s Friedrich's fate as an obscure cult figure was sealed by his utter unwillingness to expound any painterly turbulence or spontaneity in a set of energetic new graphic terms (the quality that made Delacroix and Turner so appealing to the modern world); by his obvious comfort with the rigors of his technical training and his belief in sober speech devoid of elliptical or fragmented rhetoric; and especially by his unashamed expression of a profound religious desire, unmediated by literary mythologies in the style of Blake or by political passion and social satire in the mode of Goya, and unashamedly rendered in the tight simplicities of an outmoded painterly system.

In 1975, in *Modern Painting and the Northern Romantic Tradition,* his book about the kind of modern painting that expresses spiritual longing, Robert Rosenblum offered Friedrich as a source for painters such as Gottlieb and Rothko, whose versions of intense nothingness he demonstrated to be similar illustrations of "the search for the sacred in the secular modern world." But it is important to remember that Friedrich's own search insisted on precisely the verity that was abandoned by modern seekers. A delicate respect for each twig continued to be essential to his quest, as it was not to Turner's at the time, nor certainly later to Rothko's. Friedrich's paintings with nothingness as their subject always insist on the absolute presence of something, often in detail. Adherents of modernism could comprehend spiritual longing, but not if a cross were still part of the composition, or a person pointedly staring into the distance.

In an essay in the catalog of the Metropolitan's show, Rosenblum points out that Friedrich used the same themes as the Dutch painters of the seventeenth century. Here are the marine scenes, the woman at her window, the neighboring terrain, the views of churches, all closely observed and set forth in a unifying luminous atmosphere. But again a difference should be noted. Modernist demands were quite satisfied by seventeenth-century Dutch artists, who had, despite

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their careful realism, a firm grip on the right sort of painterly detachment. They preserved the correct look of wishing chiefly to address artistic problems, to force art to work for them alone, never mind the patron and the subject. Hals with his wizard strokes and twenty shades of black, Vermeer with his points of light and amazing perspective dispositions had clearly submitted themselves to stiff painterly tests and had visibly triumphed. Let the philistines admire the faces and fabrics; serious painters and modern critics understood the real point, the artist's real work that united him to all other artists, past and present. Tears of awe were appropriate, but only for viewers appreciating the feat of genius or the act of art, not the beauty of the room or the view.

Many of the neutral themes and the lucid technique are unchanged in Friedrich's art, but it is clear that his works aimed at the soul without recourse to uniquely painterly methods for doing so. He repeatedly signaled his spiritual intention in an archaic way, organizing the picture around a central axis, which can always force the most primitive psychic attention on the most banal phenomena. Friedrich would even place figures along the same axis and make them stare with the same attention at the same sight, blocking and emotionally filtering the view; and so in his landscapes he denies any unself-conscious detachment even to his incidental figures, and wrenches still more empathy from the hapless spectator. When it isn't a person, it may be a stunted tree or a pregnant shrub, a crude hut brooding under its cap of snow or a small gate sagging in a sunlit wall that fills the picture's center with fateful importance. It may be a coffin or a cross, or it may be nothing but water or sand, seen against a luminous emptiness.

It was Friedrich who single-handedly made it natural to summon religious feeling when looking at the calm sea and the local evening sky, or while watching boats slide quietly into the mist. It was he who managed the transfiguration of the unremarkable nearby hills or the uninteresting grove of firs behind the house, insisting on a sharp spiritual need quite different from the divine awe aroused by big sublime vistas. There were contemporary British watercolorists also exploring local subjects in a restrained transparent mode, but their interest, just as with the old Dutch masters, was vehemently secular. Their works always look briskly committed to the extreme possibilities of paint, not piety.

Friedrich's great contribution was swallowed up in the increasing tide of modern scorn for the popular arts that fostered cheap versions of religious impulses, and that were thus at odds with modern views of seriousness. Still, the pictorial strategies that Friedrich invented were steadily redeemed and perfected by photographers and cinematographers. It has been they, not modern painters, who have shown how an artist, by bringing the viewer's gaze to bear with a certain meditative intensity and a certain use of light on undistinguished bits of the natural world, can convey the pain of transience and the naked force of spiritual longing in just the way Friedrich had first done it. Many moviegoers have felt the power of Friedrich's originality without knowing its source; many have learned from the camera to see God in plain landscape without ever having seen a Friedrich.

Now, after the steady rise of camera art on the aesthetic scale during the last thirty years, along with the recent irreversible disintegration of the solid modernism that used to govern so much response to art, Friedrich's time has come again. The works in the exhibition in New York are organized by medium, so that an assortment of small sepias and watercolors occupies one small room, and the array of nine oils is disposed around the adjoining hemicycle at the back of the Lehman wing. The sepias include several studies of owls, coffins, and moonlight where the pale and delicate texture is in eerie contrast to the somber theme; and there is a watercolor of the gothic ruins at Eldena, often used by Friedrich in urgently grim compositions, here seen with urgent tenderness.

On the curved wall of oil paintings hangs Friedrich's vision of the marital journey titled *On the Sailboat*, in which a man and a woman sit in the bow of a small ship, outward bound. The relative scale is striking; Friedrich's original sketch shows a very small vessel, but he has here enlarged it to rise protectively around the small pair silhouetted against the sky, who hold hands on the gunwale and stare ahead. The big boat has no visible crew or cargo, only the two passengers perched far forward the better to see what's coming, both of them oblivious to the apparently supernatural handling of their craft. What's left behind is also behind us; our view is from amidships, but the boat may well have no stern, the journey no beginning. He wears a hat, but there is no portmanteau, no shawl, no basket, no umbrella, no rug, and no hat for her.

These absences are noticeable because of the sense of present life that the plain technique permits us to feel, the artist's refusal to adopt a fairy-story style. The lady's coiffure and the shape of her clothed body are acutely contemporary, and so is the boat. But wait. There are other strange things only slowly apparent. The shore for which they are making bears a row of towered structures, which have been identified as coming from three different towns; but more than that, it bears a certain resemblance to Dürer's incandescent 1495 watercolor of Innsbruck, viewed from the north over water. And what about the man's hat, and those long curls? Dürer again, by golly, and the amorphous garments he wears below the neck only confirm the idea, since they are otherwise seamless and pleatless and buttonless in any modern scheme. And what is that spiky collar she has on? It is not, although it might seem so, a fashionable detail. It is, in fact, a standard picturesque reference to the olden days, meaning anything even vaguely of the Middle Ages, and a common international device for illustration and stage costume between the 1770s and the 1820s. So maybe we are in the past; but we are clearly right here at the same time, and circling over the ocean to the future, where the past still remains.

The clothes in Friedrich's pictures need further discussion, mainly because his ability to convey the subjective mode so well owes a great deal to his excellent sense of current fashion, a gift that he shares with Goya. Both artists turn pointedly contemporary dress into a visual sign of corporeal subjectivity. They use it to illustrate the currency and the presentness of the self in its body, and to engage our sense of our own physical selves. But writers about Friedrich want mainly to talk about something called *altdeutscher Tracht*, translated as Old German Costume, that many of his figures are wearing. Except for the discussion in Joseph Leo Koerner's new book, critics haven't said what that actually was; and nobody says anything about the range of ordinary clothing that adds such poignance to Friedrich's works, nor about any other interesting departures from it.

Koerner has finally explained that the *altdeutscher Tracht* was not medieval clothing at all, but a bit of politicized counterculture wear devised and adopted around 1815 by students and artists and ex-freedom-fighters who had struggled against the imperial might of Napoleon and were afterward trying to foster a nascent opposing sense of German nationalism. The clothes were supposed to suggest the sixteenth century and the great days of German cultural ascendance—Dürer, Luther. The style naturally became an issue only when it was

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banned in 1819, along with other forms of nationalist expression. But Friedrich continued to put it in his pictures, in the spirit of solidarity that also inspired his views of the tombs of ancient German heroes and other treasured monuments. The costume itself made no pretense to real historical style, being intended mainly to look very different from anything modern and French. Its chief effect, defying the chic cropped hair and high hats of the day, was the wearing of long hair, beards, and the big floppy berets that are still associated with the Middle Ages.

Ever since Rembrandt, of course, artists often affected such hats to suggest Raphael, not Dürer, and to claim an apolitical solidarity with painters of all epochs, not with current national issues. They were certainly worn by many German Romantic painters for just those unworldly reasons; you can see them in many portraits, and I believe you can see them in Friedrich. At the same time there were many sorts of soft student cap in use, worn with ordinary tailored coats, and these are also shown by Friedrich, notably on the younger man in *Two Men Contemplating the Moon*. The older, meant to be Friedrich himself, does indeed wear the "Old German" version, but there is clearly a point to the different clothes these two have on.

The man on the sailboat, however, is wearing something truly peculiar, even with the strangely familiar hat and hair, a sort of indefinable, timeless jumpsuit. In this picture Friedrich really did take up his Romantic license to use imaginary garb, clearly neither part of current fashion nor of current politics. The woman's pointed collar and the man's blurry suit and antique hat instead indicate a standard attempt at universality through antiquity, whereby an artist invents bits of legendary-looking raiment that evade specific practice, old or new, to make clear that we are in no time, but in a mythic past that may encompass a mythic present. Friedrich did the same with vaguely classical drapes in an earlier painting of lovers called *Summer*.

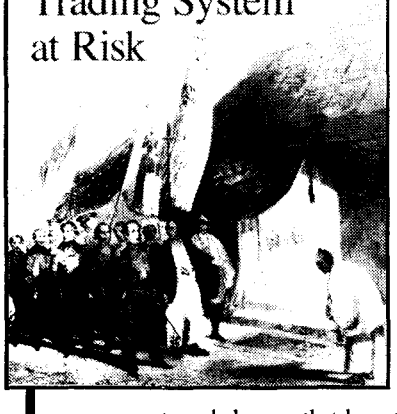
Yet this hat, too, this monumental mushroom cap, bears uncanny traces not only of Dürer and Rembrandt, but of the historical hat Vermeer wears when he paints himself into his allegory of painting, where the muse is the model holding fame's trumpet, and his hand holds the brush. Is this a vision of Friedrich the painter, newly married at 44, finally sailing forth hand in hand with his radiant new muse to join the company of great Northern artists, skimming over the water toward his own eternal Greifswald, Dresden, Stralsund, his own tropes of the immortal Innsbruck, the everlasting Delft, and all the holy cities of the Northern landscape painter? Maybe; but probably not, since he probably did not know the Vermeer.

Anyway such speculations connect Friedrich with past history, whereas this exhibition, as its title shows, is devoted to Friedrich the Romantic, to whatever attached him so vitally to his own moment and now makes him so necessary a figure for our understanding of Romanticism. Koerner's new book provides a most valuable background to this exhibition, even though he only reproduces one or two of the pictures on display. His (and his publisher's) many ravishing reproductions of Friedrich's other works show how smoothly the present examples interleave with those even more vivid ones; and the discussion of the artist is riveting and instructive.

Koerner wants to describe how Friedrich transformed landscape painting into as definitive an exponent of Romantic thought as landscape poetry became with Wordsworth. In so doing, he can link Friedrich to modern aesthetic principle, just as Romantic poetry has been shown to be linked to it during the last two decades of literary criticism. Friedrich helped produce a new art criticism, as Wordsworth did a new literary history, by forging a new relation between nature, the artist, and the viewer, one that would

JAGDISH BHAGWATI

The World Trading System at Risk



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serve a new art of experience instead of the old quest for ideal perfection.

Thus began the modern aesthetic idea, according to which the point of natural landscape lies in how it is personally seen and subjectively felt. Such seeing and feeling may best be demonstrated by an artist (poet or painter) whose individual genius perceives, transmutes, and presents the world so as to make the subjectivity become ours. It is only through the contemplation of nature, moreover, that such individual subjective exercise authentically occurs; and so landscape will have to become the modern subject for art, because its true subject is subjectivity itself. Thereafter art could replace religion, supplementing outworn creeds by rightly showing us what to make of nature in the modern world.

It is true that the importance of Romanticism to modern thought was explained first by literary critics, while Romantic painters were mainly valued by art critics for their expressions of painterly freedom, usually seen to pave the way for more serious exponents of personal vision in later decades. They were not seen as modern themselves. Koerner convincingly offers Friedrich as the Wordsworth of painting as no other artist was, another founder of emotion recollected in tranquillity—and not just recollected, but re-created as a form of deep contemplation, out of the deliberate exercise of the artist's contemplative talent.

Friedrich thus becomes the first pictorial poet of loss, the one who wishes to show the natural world as an image of something that feels as if we once possessed it but that really was not ours, something that is always still desired and still unattained. He is the painter who can give the sense of all experience as weighted with unretrievable memory—with the loss of the visionary gleam, the fleeing of that music. Such a dip into the unconscious was an early move toward modernity quite familiar to students of Romantic poetry, but less so to those accustomed to the idea of Romantic painting as primarily spontaneous.

Koerner's book opens with one of Friedrich's haunting clumps of centrally organized shrubbery that seem to fill the universe, here a thicket you can't see past. His text begins, "You are placed before a thicket in winter." Indeed you are, and Koerner goes on to show in detail how this thicket is meant for you, to display your feelings to you, to illustrate the psychic barriers you recognize between yourself and your desire. Then he goes on to show a symmetrical group of fir trees in the snow, and begins again: "You are placed . . . " And now he shows how this group forms not just a wall but an embracing chapel, not just a barrier but an invitation and a discovery; and how both pictures seem to suggest that you are the first person ever to stop just here and to look at these particular shrubs in just this way. But since they also bear the careful look of having been previously seen, the look of memory, they can never quite be yours. "You stand before the pictures," he says, "as before answers for which the questions have been lost"; and that seems right.

Thus he begins his discussion of "*Erlebniskunst,*" the Art of Experience, which is most thoroughly expounded in a later chapter titled "The Halted Traveler," where he includes a discussion of the "*Rückenfigur,*" the figure seen from the back who is so insistent a presence in Friedrich's art. He connects this personage also with his or her replacement by the viewer in such works as the thicket picture, again showing how Wordsworth manages the same thing with a smooth change of tenses and persons in his poetry. The participation of the viewer is invited as essential to the completion of the picture—which is not a completion, but only a continuation, a constant sharing in the sense of God's inexplicable promise.

Between these two discussions comes Koerner's study of Friedrich as a specifically German Romantic, whom Schlegel, Novalis, and other unpictorial German Romantics felt to be their advocate without having very articulate ways to say why. It was his old-fashioned critical enemies, thinks Koerner, who understood Friedrich's innovations and explained them best, notably the Freiherr von Ramdohr, who wrote a sustained attack on *The Cross in the Mountains* when it was first exhibited in 1808. His stout defense of the classic principles of landscape art, and his outrage at what Friedrich made of them, give a good view of the artist as a crucial figure for his date, someone after whom nothing would ever be the same. The subjective, emotional claims offered in Friedrich's painting were directly opposed to Enlightenment views of art's normative function to create, to refine, and to maintain timeless aesthetic ideals, and thus even to impose a detached morality on taste and judgment.

Koerner further describes how Friedrich's clear adherence to the old religious and emotional qualities in Northern Renaissance painting showed him to be suspiciously prone to the new habit of reviving Old German glories. The unenlightened medieval artistic style was seen by neoclassical critics to have been rightly swept away forever by the sane principles articulated in the classical seventeenth century. By reverting to the old ways in the current climate of emergent nationalism, Friedrich could seem not just naive or incompetent, but even a bit artistically compromised by his political views.

In his various attacks on *The Cross in the Mountains,* Ramdohr makes us see only how purely subversive Friedrich's painting then appeared. Instead of offering a subtle progression back through the overlapping planes of the scene, alternating degrees of light and spatial gradations to draw the eye gracefully into the distance, he brutally thrusts a mountain up in front of the sun. He thus plunges the entire front half of the view into shadow, and prevents us from rightly seeing any of its recessions in the remaining available light; and then he sinks even the immediate foreground into deeper shadow, digging a pit just where we need firm ground on which to move into the picture. And just where are we standing? We seem to be floating; and there's that huge obtrusive crucifix, no quaint wayside fixture but a looming presence with which a too-symmetrical array of overinsistent pines is contending for God's distant light and our instant response. Friedrich has notably failed to integrate the rough elements of a given prospect into a harmonious interwoven whole, to create a visual symphony out of uneven natural appearances, and so on. More obviously, he has failed even to try.

This picture instead expresses the thought, unwelcome to the Enlightened academic critic, that nature is the one true cathedral of personal worship, and that art's real task is to show how this is so, even to make it so. To accomplish this, art must abandon its old desire to make landscapes lie back among their adornments and gradually unveil themselves in a solemn dance for Beauty's sake. Obstructions must be suggested, contrasts must be emphasized, to invoke the true character of our unappeased lust; art must convey not beauty, but the way that nature makes us long for what we will never attain, the heaven that lay about us in our infancy.

In most of Friedrich's work it lies beyond death, which exerts its powerful pull in any setting he describes. Death waits not just in the graveyard but past the thicket, past the boat half gone in fog, waits beyond the entrance to the wood. Heaven, moreover, requires no obvious cross to guide our expectations, and death no coffin. The pull is simply there, and it's always out of reach—just beyond this parapet, out there on the sea, across that chasm, beyond those rolling slopes. In all of Friedrich's scenes we may observe the obstacle that he never omits: even if it's only the shore or the

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wall, or only a dim foreground against a light sky, there is always an impediment that separates foreground from distance, near space from far, and us from the incalculable future that seems to lie in our psychic past.

The painter made thousands of minute sketches of particular trees and the precise profiles of rock, summoning and mustering the elements of paintings he would distill later in the studio, sometimes twenty years later, with all the particularities intact. Koerner shows how the details of the foreground in *The Cross in the Mountains* are perfectly clear, despite their shaded tonality and the commanding drama behind them. Nothing specific has been sacrificed to that epiphany; and Friedrich is shown as the poet of *Eigentümlichkeit*, the uniqueness, the singularity, even in an extreme sense the strangeness, of anything and anyone, the particularity of each self and each of its experiences. This subjectivist position was important to many German Romantic thinkers; and it was the way Friedrich managed to convey the same idea with his close personal visions of rather barren scenery that made them believe he was their true exponent, even without trying to be so. In his art, religious longing may be precipitated only by the look of an actual tree, never by an idealized tree, a visionary tree, an idea of trees. And the experience of observing the unique tree is also unique, a moment like no other.

At the same time, Friedrich is the poet of retrieval. He collects many unique fragments and builds them into paintings that are like attempts to collect a meaning in them, not to assert what that meaning is. And so they echo what Schlegel and Novalis believed was their project, that of "Romanticizing the world." Always vaguely explained, this seems to have meant trying to rediscover its meaning according to a new sense that any such meaning is itself in a state of unfinished process, in a state of becoming. Consequently, only the sort of quest that moves both onward and backward together may hope to yield some awareness of what God intends; and that awareness, needless to say, will also be forever incomplete. Divine significance may or may not dwell in the thicket. The painting only shows the search for it.

Koerner's book is densely packed with thought and no less packed with an emotional drive similar to Friedrich's own, a refusal of detachment that feels quite appropriate for the elucidation of these charged works. His prose, however, suffers from this obsessive tendency, so we get "recuperate" fifteen times when "recover" would certainly be good now and then, and similar repetitions that become irritating. Intensive study in German has also affected Koerner's English, so that he invents words like "enframe" to mean "frame," and then again uses them much too often. But forceful arguments and vivid explications, both historical and theoretical, make this book a most welcome antidote to Helmut Börsch-Supan's ponderous tome, *Caspar David Friedrich*, which appeared in 1974, until now the only book on him in English, where dreary lists of symbols keep hampering all discussion of the works.

In his careful analysis, by contrast, Koerner proves that Friedrich's Romanticism was fundamentally modern. If a painterly modernity is the point, however, the painting doesn't make that case. The meditative precision of these owls and hills and hats and trees keeps them attached to their time, effectively preventing them from sharing in the "modernity" of a Romantic painter like Turner, whose use of primal blur detached him from his century.

But on some lovers of art the effect of Friedrich's works is quite direct; and such impact suggests that he certainly had the conceptions of a modern artist, if not a modernist painter. He was a maker of visions that can arouse deep responses in contemporary viewers, and especially in those trained to seek and find the sublime in films. It is in the mobile poetry of cinema that Friedrich's ideas seem to have been confirmed, in situations where the camera may sit for many seconds on the same empty patch of ocean, insisting on a meaning it can only adumbrate, capturing the viewer's unconscious without warning, setting memory in motion. At this exhibition, looking at a flock of birds skimming past some fishermen's nets drying on an empty moonlit beach, we can believe that in his own day Friedrich's modernity went beyond paint. Maybe it will go still further among the uncharted media of the future. ●

In the Beginning

BY PAUL BERMAN

Sandino: The Testimony of a Nicaraguan Patriot, 1921-1934
compiled and edited by Sergio Ramírez
edited and translated with an introduction by Robert Edgar Conrad

(Princeton University Press, 516 pp., $55, $17.95 paper)

To Lead As Equals: Rural Protest and Political Consciousness in Chinandega, Nicaragua, 1912-1979
by Jeffrey L. Gould

(University of North Carolina Press, 392 pp., $47.50, $14.95 paper)

Augusto César Sandino was a knockabout oil worker and mechanic who in 1926 organized his own army, appointed himself general, and joined, on the Liberal side, the last of Nicaragua's Liberal-Conservative civil wars. That was an extremely odd thing to do. Generals in Nicaragua's civil wars usually came from the oligarchic elite. Sandino was the product of a degraded feudal-style liaison between a coffee farmer and one of the farmer's wretchedly exploited women field workers. But humble origins failed to make him humble.

In 1927 the United States Marines landed in Nicaragua, not for the first time, to impose the Treaty of Tipitapa on the rival armies. The treaty called for a kind of Liberal-Conservative power-sharing in a context of free elections and, as the clincher, a new American-style army, non-political and professional, to be called the National Guard. The generals on both sides agreed to sign—except for two of the Liberals, one of whom was quickly killed by the Marines. The other was Sandino, who exploded with nationalist wrath and vowed to battle on. That was another odd decision. The Liberal leader, General Moncada, advised him, as any military man would have done, that fighting the Marines was a fool's mission.

Yet with no more than twenty-nine loyal comrades at his side, Sandino launched an attack. The Americans replied by sending what Sandino called

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"their goddamned airplanes" to decimate remote Nicaraguan villages—possibly the first instance anywhere of that modern specialty, the anti-insurgency aerial atrocity. This, too, failed to dissuade him. Quixotic persistence was his greatest oddity of all. After six years of fighting in the Segovian mountains, the Marines completed their training of the National Guard and withdrew, confident of the new army and its English-speaking commander, Anastasio Somoza García. And only then, with Nicaragua's Liberals back in power and the gringos out, did Sandino elect to sign a peace agreement.

Unfortunately, Somoza and the Guard, who took a light view of peace treaties, began hunting down Sandino's men. So the guerrilla general left the mountains for Managua to iron out a stronger agreement—and discovered that he himself was among the rebels slated for death by Somoza and the Guard. The assassination of Sandino and his top aides (followed by a massacre of 300 pro-Sandino campesinos in the north) was the first step in a slow-motion coup d'état that put the Somoza family in power from the mid-1930s until 1979—when the Somozas were themselves overthrown by the Marxist group that called itself, in a spirit of bravado and revenge, the Sandinista Front for National Liberation (FSLN). And in probably every country on earth, the story of Augusto César Sandino's "death and resurrection," as Jean Ziegler calls it, blossomed overnight into one of the most popular and stirring myths of the worldwide anti-imperialist revolution.

Exactly what motivated Sandino during his strange, doomed career in the mountains? This can be specified. He was, at the bottom of his militant soul, a Bolivarian nationalist, a continental and not just a Nicaraguan redeemer—in the belief that, as he said, "We Latin Americans form a single nationality." The nationalism was partly racial, emphasizing an Indo-Hispanic identity, and partly lower class, devoted to the workers and the campesinos. He put in a good word for the eight-hour day, for payment in cash, and generally for the social legislation of more advanced countries.

Sometimes, in an extravagant mood, Sandino borrowed a few phrases from the revolutionary left. "The wick of the 'Proletarian Explosion' against the imperialists of the earth will be lit," he wrote. An echo from Lenin's *Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism* crept into one of his manifestos. He adopted the red-and-black colors of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism. Yet he was not influenced in any deep way by Marxism or anarchism, or even by the flexible anarcho-liberalism that cropped up in the Mexican Revolution (though some have argued otherwise). Mostly his instincts ran toward nineteenth-century Latin American liberalism. He still savored some last scent of the French Revolution. He pictured "our young country, this dark beauty of the tropics," wearing "on her head the Phrygian cap of liberty." He took as his slogan: "Neither extreme right nor extreme left, but rather 'United Front.' "

He knew (as many a Marxist has failed to know) that because Nicaragua has more land than population, land ownership has traditionally leaned toward small-holding and away from the monopoly pattern of a country like El Salvador. Apart from an ambiguous phrase or two about the desirability of state ownership, Sandino was careful to define his movement as anti-imperialist—but not agrarian. He wanted land for those who remained landless and planned a farm cooperative for the primitive Indians of the Nicaraguan north, but he ruled out a large-scale redistribution of property. The abolition of capitalism was not on his agenda. He acknowledged a role for capital, so long as capital no longer "exploited or humiliated" labor; he wanted "all social classes in our struggle, without ideological classifications or 'isms.' "

Sometimes he invoked the spiritualist ideas of a certain Buenos Aires theosophical cult, according to which the great guides of mankind were Adam, Moses, Jesus, and Bolívar. His army was thoroughly evangelized on these points and came to resemble, according to the Basque journalist Ramón de Belausteguigoitia, who interviewed Sandino in his last weeks, a "religious sect." A cult of Sandino's own personality formed no small part of the sacred atmosphere. One of his soldiers thought he saw a halo above the general's head. The troops were required to swear allegiance to Sandino by name, not just to the discipline of rank and office. One of the first acts of his rebellion was to rename a town "Sandino City."

He overflowed with bravado. He was always hurling invective about "cowardly buccaneers" and "gringo pirates." Sometimes the bravado gloried in the suffering and impending death of his own forces, and of his own impending death, which gave his statements a peculiar sting of masochism. "Come, morphine addicts, come and kill us in our own land," he said. "Our blood will redden the white dome of your famous White House, the cavern where you concoct your crimes." Even his official seal was drenched in gore: it showed a cam-

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pesino decapitating a Marine with a machete, while the motto "A Free Country or Death" again invoked his own imminent destiny. He did have an idea of winning, and he imagined the young girls in Managua thrusting flowers as his army marched in a victory parade. But more often he imagined his own defeat.

Sandino was, in short, an original—though in the course of the world movement for decolonization, originals like him have popped up more than once, heroic leaders who elaborate their own religious ideas and personality cults around national and anti-imperialist themes. Sandino's uniqueness lies mostly in his isolation, his failure to tie his ideas and histrionic personality to larger forces. A Communist like Mao Zedong, whose war for China began the same year as Sandino's war for Nicaragua, could look to the Soviet Union for aid. Sandino had no interest in the Soviet Union. According to Belausteguigoitia, he rejected any kind of "reform based on the oppression of liberty," and for that reason he refused an offer of Comintern backing from Agustín Faribundo Martí, El Salvador's Communist leader.

If Sandino had taken up arms ten or fifteen years earlier, he might have won support from his natural allies, the liberals and the spiritualists of revolutionary Mexico (liberalism and spiritualism tended to go together in Mexico, too). But by the time he pleaded for their help, in 1929, the Mexican leaders were in no mood to pick a new quarrel with the United States over distant Nicaragua. Instead, Peruvian left-nationalists rallied to his side. But Sandino couldn't get along with Peru's agent on the spot and expelled him from the movement, together with El Salvador's Communist. A cloud of isolation hovered over him, even within his own country.

He did establish a social base among some of the remote campesinos of the Río Coco and the Segovias—the mountain farmers, the Miskito Indians of the east and other Indians of the north, who could sustain a guerrilla insurgency indefinitely. (These turned out to be some of the social bases of the contra movement in the 1980s, by the way.) But these regions were so backward and poor that the campesinos lived, as the Nicaraguans say, "on the pure heart of Jesus." They had no chance (in 1927-34 or in the 1980s) of challenging the power of Nicaragua's urbanized Pacific Coast, where the bulk of the population and almost all the power made its home.

People in the western cities did sometimes shout a few slogans in Sandino's favor, and he concluded, with only a little self-deception, that "the vast majority of Nicaraguans are with me in spirit." But spirit in the populated zones had no way to become flesh. He had almost no party organization; his insurgency was strictly military, apart from a couple of solidarity committees (again like the contras later). One wing of the Nicaraguan labor movement was turning radical in that period, toward a Costa Rican-influenced Marxism-Leninism. But almost nothing connected his mountain guerrillas to the organized workers.

The students in León, Nicaragua's university town, tended to admire him, but he made no great effort to capitalize on his status there. The intellectuals who approved of his movement did so at such remote distances as to be almost useless. A magazine editor in Honduras rallied to his cause and served for a while as the rebel army's loudspeaker to the world; but the editor and Sandino fell out. Among Nicaraguan writers and journalists, only a handful ever met Sandino, which is astonishing to consider. Possibly the only Nicaraguan journalist who took the trouble to journey into the mountains for a full-length interview was a young novelist named José Román, whose center of activity in those days was Greenwich Village, not Nicaragua, and who qualified as a journalist because of work he did at a New York newspaper that later merged into today's *El Diario*. Yet not even Román succeeded in getting his interview into print—until forty-five years later, when the war against the Marines was ancient history.

So Sandino waged his strange Bolivarian campaign in the mountains and jungles, and he had no way to attract wider support or even to explain himself to the world. "Silence, isolation, the despair of remaining ignored overwhelmed us," he wrote.

The contrast between the nationalist nobility of Sandino's campaign and the inarticulateness that surrounded it and that condemned him to defeat is, I think, the single most salient aspect of his career. The nationalist bravery has always inspired admiration and even awe. But the awe-struck admirers, in order to make sense of their own enthusiasm, have always had to project onto Sandino's struggle hopes and ideologies that are their own.

These projections have varied spectacularly. The first group of important intellectuals who rallied to Sandino's cause was a little circle of extremely talented young poets from Nicaragua's Granada oligarchy, including Pablo Antonio Cuadra (today the oldest and most prestigious intellectual associated with *La Prensa*) and José Coronel Urtecho (in recent years the senior literary figure of the Sandinista Front, after a long career as a Somocista). In the late 1920s and early 1930s these poets were keen admirers of the French monarchist theories of Charles Maurras. They saluted Mussolini as the champion of the Latin race, and they looked for a Mussolini-like strongman to rescue Nicaragua from chaos and Americanization. They hoped that Sandino was such a figure—which explains why the same poets went on to support Anastasio Somoza and organized the "Blue Shirts" on his behalf, even if Somoza did murder their original hero. Some of the best and most influential examples of the extensive literature of anti-Yankee Sandino verse in Nicaragua were written by Cuadra; but it is not often recalled that the author of those ferocious poems, wonderfully talented though he is, and heroically anti-dictatorial though he became after the defeat of the Axis powers, was in those years something of a fascist.

An alternative appreciation of Sandino—the Conservative version, which Cuadra embraced in later years—emphasizes a more conventional nationalism compatible with the republican constitutionalist ideals of *La Prensa*. Still another interpretation, visible lately among the contra supporters in Miami, sees in Sandino a grand historical predecessor to Enrique Bermúdez, that other mountain rebel who agreed to disarm and ended up a murder victim in Managua. Or turning to the academic left, a

"All We Know of Heaven"

My plastic coffee cup (a Melmac), "scarce,"
Antique, looks soft and almost natural,
A morning glory color. "The future! The past!"
I toast, sipping the "naturally decaffeinated" taste
(A flavor like evening, too dark to hurry);
"To strangers! Myself!" (Knock wood.)
Or simulated wood: my chair, a rosewood patch
Veneered on particle-board; a sawdust chair.

I lean on foam covered with leather-like
Polyurethane; my feet on linoleum
That easily "attains the rhetoric of oak."
The designer's language comforts me, when I
Crave what lasts—the cup, the artifice—
Whatever simulates an after-life.

JUDITH HALL

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Florida professor named Donald C. Hodges, the author of *Intellectual Foundations of the Nicaraguan Revolution*, has proposed an imaginative interpretation that reflects a fond hope of one wing of the American radical movement—namely, the belief that libertarian radicalism and Leninist communism are reconcilable, so long as the reconciliation is filtered through a lofty spirituality. Sandino, in Hodges's projection, was a highly intellectual and crafty crypto-semi-Leninist-semi-anarchist, whose theosophical mysticism was by no means secondary.

The Sandinistas' Sandino—the projection of Sandino as the predecessor to the FSLN's own brand of Marxism—is, then, only one version among several. The FSLN view was constructed in the mid-1960s and '70s by the law student Carlos Fonseca, after he broke from the stodgy Moscow-line Socialist Party to build a guerrilla movement in the mountains, Cuban-style. In *Sandino, guerrillero proletario* and other writings, Fonseca described Sandino as not exactly a Communist, but as something very close, "a brother of the Communists," mostly because of the time that he did spend in collaboration with Martí of El Salvador. Fonseca put together a Sandino chronology and a collection of documents, which were intended to bolster the idea that guerrilla near-communism was indigenous to Nicaragua and was, in fact, the country's finest tradition. But since Fonseca was himself a guerrilla leader and fell in combat not long before the 1979 revolution, the work on Sandino was never finished, and Fonseca's friend and comrade Sergio Ramírez, a man of the desk and not of the gun (and later on Daniel Ortega's vice president), had to take up the burden.

Ramírez's version, spelled out in four major essays and other writings, is a good deal more sophisticated than Fonseca's, and more tolerant of life's little contradictions. The problem of Sandino and the Communists embarrasses Ramírez less. He frankly concedes that certain circumstances from the 1920s and '30s can even be cited, or at any rate manipulated, to bolster what he calls the "conservative" idea of Sandino as anti-Communist—though the blame for these circumstances belongs to the foolish sectarianism of Mexican Communists, not to Sandino's own beliefs. Ramírez's Sandino was not, in any event, an intellectual, and the way to understand him is not through the analysis of abstract political ideas. He was a practical man, a "well-read artisan" who dwelled in the world of "praxis."

His purposes have to be read in his deeds and his concrete programs, not in his theorizing. The refusal to sign the Treaty of Tipitapa with the Conservatives and Liberals showed his anti-oligarchic radicalism. The war against the Marines, and in fact every breath he took, showed his commitment to anti-imperialism. His effort to rouse the whole of Latin America showed an instinct for what would later become the modern non-aligned movement. The concern for workers and campesinos showed a commitment to social justice. And between anti-oligarchism, anti-imperialism, non-alignment, and social justice, the essence of the FSLN's program for the Sandinista People's Revolution of 1979 can be found.

Maybe Sandino did demonstrate an insufficient zeal for agrarian reform and displayed some "conservative" instincts on this important matter; he was sometimes, as Ramírez nicely put it in a lecture from 1983, "out of focus." Yet his "fundamental project" was, even so, "the taking of power," which is not conservative. And Sandino anticipated the FSLN in narrower ways, too. At the end of his life, for example, he thought about building his own political party—which anticipated, according to Ramírez, the FSLN notion of "people's democracy." Not a "brother to the Communists," but a modern Sandinista "in embryo."

Ramírez's collection of Sandino documents, together with two of his own essays (the biographical "El muchacho de Niquinohomo" and the analytic "Sandino: clase e ideología"), his chronology, and other scholarly side material, amounts to 261 documents and 914 pages, an enormous work, which has been published in numerous editions in Central America under the title *Augusto C. Sandino: El pensamiento vivo* ("The Living Thought"). This is the original from which Princeton University Press has derived its own shorter volume, which says on the cover, "Edited and Translated by Robert Edgar Conrad," but says inside, "Compiled and Edited by Sergio Ramírez, Edited and Translated with an Introduction and Additional Selections by Robert Edgar Conrad." The Princeton version, though, is not only shorter than Ramírez's but oddly paler and duller, like a fax.

Presumably for purposes of academic neutrality, "El muchacho de Niquinohomo" and "Sandino: clase e ideología," along with Ramírez's three prefaces, his chronology, and his useful biographical appendix, have all been deleted, which is a pity, given the historical importance of these writings, not to mention the literary merits of "El muchacho." A small lonely excerpt from Ramírez's view of Sandino does survive in Conrad's modest introduction, without mention of the larger framework of FSLN interpretation or the existence in Nicaragua of competing views. And with nothing left of Ramírez's scholarly apparatus except a few remnant footnotes to explicate the material, and with little added by Princeton's editor, the Sandino documents are left pretty much to stand on their own.

But this they cannot do, by and large. Sandino spent his years in the mountains and jungles without even a secretary to take dictation (because, he said, no one wanted to come and eat roasted monkey meat without salt), and most of what he wrote were rapidly scribbled letters or messages addressed to persons whom American readers will not recognize, regarding events that readers know nothing about. His longest and most important political statement, "Plan for the Realization of Bolívar's Highest Dream," which was composed in 1929, calls for the twenty-one governments of Latin America to do all kinds of ambitious things: organize a Latin American court of justice, dig an Atlantic-Pacific canal across Nicaragua, annul the Monroe Doctrine. But to decipher even these straightforward Bolivarian points without the electric light of editorial commentary is a tedious business, given Sandino's lack of familiarity, as he himself confessed, with "the tortuosities of the language of Cervantes." The key sentence in the "Plan for the Realization of Bolívar's Highest Dream" goes:

> Profoundly convinced, as we are, that North American capitalism has arrived at its last stage of development, transforming itself as a result into imperialism; and that it now no longer has any respect for theories of right and justice, ignoring the inexorable principles of independence of the divisions of the Latin American nationality, we view as indispensable, and even more so, undelayable, the Alliance of our Latin American states as a way to maintain that independence before the designs of U.S. imperialism, or before that of any other power that may wish to subject us to its interests.

Reading these documents is like stumbling on an old plane wreck in the jungle. A half-rotted pamphlet pokes out from under a calabash tree. What is this, you wonder.

The gap between the real Sandino and the ideological projections that are made on him is, in any case, more eloquent than either the documents or the projections. The gap expresses what is perhaps the fundamental predicament of Nicaraguan history: the cultural and political chasm between the largely illiterate masses and the educated elite. Over and over again, the masses have launched insurgent movements for land-to-the-landless, for self-government,

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for Indian traditions, for workers' rights. But since the culture of the masses traditionally lacks a sophisticated political dimension and even a political rhetoric, and since ties to the educated elite have always been frail, the insurgents have repeatedly been unable to express themselves properly. They cannot outargue their oppressors. They cannot even find the right phrases to attract allies.

One or another branch of the elite has sometimes seen fit to champion the cause of a given sector of the lower classes—and in that case the masses have adopted whatever political or religious rhetorics that the elite propose. But the elite rhetorics never entirely fit the occasion. And among the many half-mute campesino and worker movements lacking in sophisticated ideology or rhetoric and incapable of outarguing its opponents or attracting widespread support, Sandino's campaign in the mountains should perhaps be regarded as merely the most exotic. He himself defined the predicament perfectly by remarking: "The intellectuals have betrayed us, and we have had to take up arms."

Jeffrey Gould's *To Lead As Equals* describes more typical movements, and how they have contended with the gap between themselves and the elite. Gould is a Marxist-influenced social historian in the style of the contemporary social historians of the United States—which is to say, a scholar whose investigative instincts mostly go in a different direction from the Marxist scholarship of Latin America. The Latin Marxists describe Nicaragua in a framework of distant abstraction, such that every contending social force looks like a cipher in a mathematical equation. The American social historians put aside distant abstractions as quickly as possible in order to peer through a magnifying lens, so that every social force looms squirmy with local life and idiosyncrasy. Gould's social forces are the sugar mill workers, dockworkers, and campesinos of the small Chinandega region of western Nicaragua. And so powerful is his lens, so committed is he to writing history "from the bottom up," that we find ourselves reading literally about who slept with whom (a significant aspect of the social struggle, incidentally, as illustrated by Sandino's parental background).

The details sometimes overwhelm the story. Still, the final impressive effect is to make us appreciate how grueling, how momentous, every new struggle for land or rights has been. At the beginning of the century, millworkers at Chinandega's San Antonio sugar mill, the largest and most up-to-date in Central America, worshiped a company burro and toiled under a peonage so grotesque that simple labor infractions landed them in jail. Workers in those degraded circumstances couldn't begin to argue their cause against managers and owners. Even in the recent past (for that matter, probably today), legal documents were a mystery akin to virgin birth. Campesinos in the sugar fields found their signatures on documents they never meant to endorse. And to advance to a higher level, to construct the social doctrines that could build and justify powerful labor and campesino movements, to conceive of broad alliances and to put them into effect, was a matter of generations. It meant taking bits and pieces from one or another sophisticated rhetoric, whenever they seemed useful, and turning the language and the arguments to purposes that were local and sometimes strangely inappropriate, the way that country people in today's Managua build homes out of advertising cardboard and plastic sheets.

The direct role played by Sandino in the gradual growth of the workers' and campesinos' consciousness in Chinandega was, it is interesting to see, close to nil. He aroused a nationalist enthusiasm among Chinandega workers during the 1920s and early 1930s, but it evaporated, and not much of a legacy was left behind. No one should doubt that Sandino's ultimate effect on Nicaragua has been huge; but apart from a tiny number of northern campesinos who retained his memory into later eras, the main conduit for his influence has been, after all, the elite intellectuals, either Cuadra and his colleagues on the Catholic ultraright and at *La Prensa*, or Ramírez and his comrades in the FSLN. The workers and the campesinos that Gould has studied were not automatically plugged in to circles like these. Their connections ran the other way—toward the uncultivated and unintellectual Somozas.

The Somoza family came to power, as is sometimes forgotten, on a populist note. Anastasio Somoza García pretended to defend the masses against the Conservative Party oligarchs (and to some degree, he actually did). He cleverly spoke the *obrerista* rhetoric of the artisan workers. And by basing his dictatorship partly on mass organizations, he and his cronies willy-nilly instructed the rank and file in the arts of coalition-building and in a relatively non-feudal language of rights instead of mutual obligations. It is original, even brave of Gould to notice this role of the Somozas.

Of course, factors other than Somocista populism contributed to the slow growth in public awareness. Trade unionists from the Socialist Party played

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a role—though the Socialists were themselves a sometime semi-ally of Somocista populism, as was unavoidable under conditions of dictatorial rule. In the 1960s and '70s radical partisans of Catholic liberation theology had an influence. Indian traditions played a part. And by incorporating these different political languages and traditions into their own movements, the workers and the campesinos eventually pushed Somocismo to a point where the populist promise faded into a "bad joke," as Gould says, and the kleptocracy stood revealed, and nothing but force kept it in power. Then along came the FSLN, which had an answer to force, and the revolution was at hand.

Gould concludes that, by allying with the revolutionary vanguard party in the late 1970s, the Chinandega masses finally took their place as active and conscious participants on the stage of Nicaraguan history—which is, by the way, not only the Sandinista opinion, but also the conclusion reached by probably most of the academic scholars who have written about modern Nicaragua. A more skeptical argument, of course, could also be advanced. Gould himself acknowledges on one of his last pages that "the relationship between the vanguard and the campesinos still suffers from some misunderstanding"—which is rather a tender way to express what happened to rural people during the ten years of Sandinista rule. Almost nothing in his study, except a casual observation about a "structural similarity" between Somocista unions and Sandinista unions, prepares the reader for the fact that shortly before Gould's book came out the millworkers who stand at the center of his study voted overwhelmingly to disaffiliate from the Sandinista unions in favor of labor organizations that maintain, some of them, loose ties to the AFL-CIO. In last year's national elections, the Sandinistas retained important areas of support in Chinandega, but the region as a whole voted for Violeta Chamorro.

To Lead As Equals is a valuable book, though. Nicaraguan history in the twentieth century has indeed been a story of the masses struggling step by step to emerge from the shadow of elite manipulation and domination. Sandino's nationalist insurgency may stand in the imagination of the world as the shining symbol of that story, but its guts, the inner reality, have always been the kind of grim, unglamorous campaigns for land and labor rights that Gould has now described in greater detail than any scholar before him. These were the grass-roots movements that forced the Somozas to strike a deal with unions back in the 1930s and '40s, then to permit a small agrarian reform in the early 1960s; the campaigns that produced the massive land seizures during the 1979 revolution, then led to further demands for land and rights both within the FSLN and (here Gould would demur) against it—the campaigns that today may have reached their greatest height ever, in chaotic and sometimes destructive land seizures going on right now in the old districts of the contra war.

The progress from burro-worship to the movements of today has been enormous, and it has from time to time accelerated at the breathtaking rate that can only be called a social revolution. Yet the gap between the world of the elite and the mute vulnerability of the masses isn't about to disappear. The chasm is too big, too old. It is a wound whose origin is nothing other than the Spanish Conquest of the Central American Indians half a millennium ago. Events like the Sandinista People's Revolution (for some observers) and the electoral repudiation of the Sandinistas eleven years later (for other observers) raise intoxicating hopes for a united and socially progressive Nicaragua. But there is room in the vast historic chasm for even the grandest of expectations, and shortly they tumble in, and the bitter inarticulate struggles of the poor keep breaking out, and a thousand more of these mute, grim struggles will have to come and go before the fateful dilemma of the Nicaraguan masses entirely disappears.

PAUL BERMAN, who writes for *The Village Voice* and other publications, is writing a book on Nicaragua.

The Magic Touch

BY DENNIS WRONG

Charisma by Charles Lindholm

(Basil Blackwell, 224 pp., $33.95)

Of all the specialized terms adopted by academic social scientists, "charisma" has probably been the most thoroughly popularized and trivialized. Max Weber originally borrowed it from church historians, who used it to describe the aura of God's grace, or the touch of the divine, possessed by certain religious personalities. It is still used by those Protestant sects, sometimes called charismatics, who practice speaking in tongues, the induction of trancelike states, and collective frenzies of divine possession. Weber extended it to political as well as religious leaders, and he secularized it in treating it as a relation between an individual and a group, namely, the imputation by the latter to the former of extraordinary endowments permitting him (or much more rarely her) to provide guidance and leadership on vital matters. Perhaps it is not surprising that journalists should have seized on the term in the highly personalized ambience of democratic mass politics. Still, the concept has been utterly banalized when a politician is quoted as saying, "If they want charisma, I'll give it to them," and when anyone able to make an impression in a thirty-second sound bite is called charismatic.

For Weber, the charisma of prophets, heroes, and demagogues (in the original sense of arousing the demos) was an innovative, even a revolutionary, force. Jesus' "It is written, but I say unto you" epitomized the challenge that the charismatic prophet levels against tradition and established routine. Charles Lindholm, a Harvard anthropologist, ably traces the affinities between Weber's concept and the ideas of various other modern thinkers, and thus moves beyond the narrow frame of religio-political leadership within which it is usually discussed. Weber's image of the charismatic leader owed something to Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, but as a sociologist he concerned himself with the group that rallied to the leader's support, whereas the Nietzschean hero rejected and was rejected by the herd.

Lindholm next associates the band of enthusiastic followers with Durkheim's theory of collective excitation as the manifestation and source of society's power to control individuals and bind them into a unity. The group rather than the exceptional individual becomes the locus of charisma. Lindholm notes the

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negative version of Durkheim's idea in the account by the crowd psychologists Gustave Le Bon and Gabriel Tarde of the antinomian passions that overwhelm the individual in agitated crowds and mobs. Finally, he turns to Freud, the creator of "what is by far the most coherent theory of emotional structure available to modern Western thought," for a deeper psychological analysis of both leaders and followers, individual and group. Freud links the charismatic relationship to universal experiences such as subjection to paternal authority and Oedipal conflict within the family, and the ecstatic loss of self in sexual love, as well as to the phenomenon of transference in psychoanalytic therapy. Among the theorists of charisma, it was Freud, surely, ambivalent in stressing both the regressive nature of "group psychology" and its fulfillment of the need for self-transcendence ideally realized in love, who did full justice to twentieth-century experience.

Turning to more contemporary writers (Erik Erikson, Wilfred Bion, Heinz Kohut, and Christopher Lasch), Lindholm observes that psychologists, drawing on at least one side of Freud's depth analysis, tend to stress the pathological aspects of the charismatic leader and his followers. Sociologists, on the other hand, following Durkheim to a greater extent than Weber, have striven to "normalize" the charismatic group, seeing it as no more than a special case of what occurs in all forms of group life, or at most as a compensatory refuge from the meaninglessness and anomie of modern life. Emphasizing the specifics of modernity, some writers have regarded the desire for charismatic immersion in a group to be a result of the uncertain and conflicting identities of contemporary "other-directed" persons.

Having reviewed these "theoretical" perspectives on charisma, Lindholm devotes most of the second half of his book to three case studies of "practice": Hitler and the Nazi Party, Charles Manson and his "Family," and Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple. Lindholm has recognized that the conditions of modern life that are conducive to evil charismatic enchantments have hardly disappeared. Still, in choosing these three examples, he has rather loaded the dice against charisma. Surely he should have chosen at least one case in which the consequences of charisma were ambiguous. He might, for instance, have looked at the Rajneesh cult, which has been the subject of a detailed account by Frances Fitzgerald and a thinly fictionalized novel about the involvement in the cult of a professor at a major university and his family. Despite various fraudulent and illegal actions by the cult's leadership clique that led to its eventual collapse and dispersion, it lacked altogether the sinister, death-haunted overtones of Lindholm's three cases; many erstwhile devotees looked back on their experience as a valuable one.

Nietzsche, Weber, and Durkheim feared that modern life was increasingly inimical to charisma, believing that its diminution or disappearance would result in a hedonistically self-centered and spiritually empty mode of existence—the reign of universal philistinism, for Nietzsche; the discontents of anomie, for Durkheim; the "disenchantment of the world," for Weber. Since Hitler, these implied affirmations of charisma have to be seen in a different light. Indeed, Nietzsche and Weber have been charged with justifying Hitler before the fact. Lindholm shrewdly finds connections between Durkheim and both the heroic individualism of the two Germans and the brutalized mobs anathematized by the crowd psychologists who were (especially Tarde) Durkheim's intellectual adversaries in the 1890s. Durkheim is usually seen as a sober, rationalistic proponent of the subordination of the individual to the common morality that is the very foundation of society. In his memoirs, though, Raymond Aron recalled Marcel Mauss, Durkheim's disciple and nephew, expressing consternation over the resemblance between the Nuremberg rallies and the collective effervescence that Durkheim saw as forging the social bond in the ceremonies of Australian aborigines.

The study of social movements has recently been dominated by a theory of "resource mobilization" that regards movements as basically rational collective responses to frustrating social conditions. Long-standing grievances, according to this view, have merely awaited the appearance of resourceful leaders, often from outside the group, to find political expression. This approach reflects approval by the political generation of the '60s for the social movements in support of civil rights, peace, feminism, gay liberation, environmentalism, and so on. Its commonsensical, even banal, emphasis on the material and organizational prerequisites for mounting an effective social movement is a far cry from the apocalyptic apprehensions of the mass society theorists. To read these sociologists, you could think the terrible events of the first half of the present century had never happened. Lindholm's contrary awareness may have an old-fashioned ring, but it is a necessary corrective to current academic approaches to social movements.

Lindholm contends that charisma has different meanings in primitive or premodern and modern societies. Durkheim's model for uplifting collective experience was the group rites of primitive Australians. In focusing on the leader rather than the group, Weber mentioned tribal chieftains and such legendary heroes of ancient societies as Achilles and Cuchulain. Lindholm draws on his background as an anthropologist to describe shamanism as the earliest form of charisma, and he provides a detailed description of the "shamanic culture" of the Bushmen of the Kalahari desert. He concludes that in "less complex societies . . . a positive vision of charismatic involvement is rather more the rule than the exception." Only as society becomes "highly centralized, impersonal and rationalized" does charisma assume the millennial, revolutionary character attributed to it by Weber.

Lindholm mentions as recent leaders "in this millennial mode" Gandhi, Sukarno, Trotsky, Castro, Mao, and Khomeini. The bureaucratization of the modern world reduces, as Weber saw, the possibility of eruptive charismatic breakthroughs and transvaluations. But Weber mistakenly thought that "rationalization would make charisma disappear," whereas "instead it has rendered charismatic revelations increasingly distorted and fanatical." Hence the hate-filled, murderous quality of recent charismatic movements and the near-psychotic, paranoid personalities of their leaders.

If modernity frustrates the human need for self-transcendence that finds fulfillment in charismatic movements, it is nevertheless the case that "despite social conditions that would seem to promote charismatic reactions, charismatic movements are not as widespread or as overwhelming as we might think." Lindholm proceeds to enumerate various alternatives that "give a mild and tamed taste of the fervor offered by charisma." These include consumerism in the form of shopping sprees; ceremonial affirmations of patriotism, including reverence for the president as the "personalized nation"; and the idolization of sports and entertainment figures. Religious cults still flourish, of course, both Pentecostal offshoots of the Protestant churches and others that blend psychotherapy, politics, and "new age" religions in various unstable combinations. (Jim Jones combined the appeals of both kinds of cult.) Finally, the intimate sphere of the family, friendship, and, when these fail, psychotherapy provides a private outlet for self-absorption.

Romantic love parallels charisma most

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of all, erasing the boundaries of self in fusion with the other, pitting the couple, like a small charismatic movement, against social constraints. But Lindholm notes aptly that romantic love as the most effective alternative to public charisma has undergone progressive devaluation in our sexually permissive society. The related decline of the nuclear family is also relevant. The obvious inference is that "self-transcendence, no longer found in intimate personal relationships and long absent in the central institutions of the society, will be sought elsewhere." Lindholm suggests that the "expressive public arenas" of "sport, religion, art, entertainment, and consumption" will become even more important in people's lives without adequately filling the gap left by idealized personal relations. This is altogether plausible: charismatic status must certainly be granted to someone like Elvis Presley, who remains the subject of rumor, legend, and fantasy years after his death.

Yet the conditions generating a need for more intense charismatic movements remain. In his conclusion, Lindholm weaves back and forth between claiming that there can be "world-affirmative" as well as "world-rejecting" charismatic groups, that social crisis is likely to produce more radical, less tolerant movements, and warning that even the more positive groups tend to develop world-rejecting inner cores and grandiose leaders that make them likely "to spiral into psychotic fantasies and collapse." He ends on a hopeful note, however, with the suggestion that charisma, despite Weber, can be a stabilizing force supporting order.

Lindholm overlooks, I think, the effect of historical events. Both nationalism and socialism have been discredited in the developed democracies, making unlikely any recurrence, at least in the near future, of mass movements affirming political ideologies that function as secular religions. This was what the much maligned and misunderstood "end of ideology" writers of the 1950s were actually saying, and the decline of the New Left and the collapse of communism have tended to confirm them over time. The death of socialism, not as social democratic reformism but as the prospect of an utterly different "alternative society," will have, for better or for worse, far-reaching consequences. It should not be forgotten that most of the fascist leaders of the interwar years—Mussolini, Doriot, Déat, Mosley, de Man—started out as socialists, or, as in Hitler's case, took over a minor socialist party or grouplet.

Lindholm's final observations show how difficult it is to stick to the theological or Weberian definition of charisma as the perceived attribute of an individual who challenges the existing order of things. Weber himself contended that the charisma of a leader could be transferred after death to an office and even to an institution or organization, but he saw such a transfer as part of a process he called the "routinization of charisma," a process leading to its conversion into a stable traditional or bureaucratic hierarchy. Conservative Weberians like Edward Shils and Robert Nisbet interpreted this not as the fading or disappearance of charisma, but as its institutionalization in the form of piety and reverence that sustained established authority—thus collapsing the distinction between charisma and tradition with which Weber began. In effect, they equated charisma with Durkheim's concept of the sacred, a rather different association than the one traced by Lindholm.

For Weber, charisma stood for any passionate attachment to life, the world, and other people that was intense enough to break the grip of everyday custom and habit. Even more broadly, charisma connotes any strong emotional attachment of the self to an external object. It becomes virtually identical with Freud's Eros, the vital, outward-reaching impulse of human beings to make unifying contact with the world. Lindholm closes with such an affirmation of charisma as "lived vitality." But surely the concept has become, by this point, too sweeping to be of much help in understanding the promises and the torments of social and political movements.

DENNIS WRONG is the author of *Power: Its Forms, Bases, and Uses* (University of Chicago Press).

Dangling Man

BY MIDGE DECTER

Saul Bellow: A Biography of the Imagination by Ruth Miller

(St. Martin's Press, 385 pp., $24.95)

Under normal circumstances, it is somewhat difficult to feel sorry for Saul Bellow. He has had a long and immensely productive career as a novelist and is still going strong. He has been heaped with prizes and honors, all the way to Stockholm. Moreover, as is not always the case, these prizes and honors reflect the existence of a truly ardent, when not downright worshipful, readership. Though it is no doubt sometimes burdensome to be the object of the kind of academic industry that has over the years grown up around him, surely the compensations outweigh any irritations: writers, after all, write to be closely attended to. And if Bellow has not altogether succeeded in absenting himself from the less than edifying play of literary politics, he has more or less managed to stand aside from some of its uglier manifestations.

Reading Ruth Miller's biography, however, one's heart goes out to him. Miller teaches English at Stony Brook, and by her account she and Bellow have been friends—at least tutor and tutee—for something like half a century. As her subtitle leads one to suspect, her book is neither the story of Bellow's life nor a proper critical examination of his work, but rather a 341-page (plus twenty-three pages of notes and appendices) examination of the state of, and the progression of, his feelings. The "imagination" about which Miller claims to speak has very little to do with what is usually meant by the term when applied to a novelist, i.e., those acts of mind through which a storyteller is able to create fictitious yet autonomous worlds peopled by fictitious yet autonomous characters.

For her, Bellow's imagination is coextensive with a seemingly unremitting quest on his part for some kind of spiritual teaching, some form of transcendence, that will either elevate him above, or reconcile him with, the human condition. She would have him, as Prufrock said, "pinned and wriggling on the wall." Aside from the fact that the results of her effort in this regard are generally obtuse and off the mark, no one should be made to suffer such scrutiny at such length—least of all Bellow, who, when it comes to his questing, speaks with full and rich consciousness, and often

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great brilliance, for himself.

On the other hand, he does seem to have had some share of responsibility for Miller's presumptuousness. Over the years they have had many conversations during which she must have been making notes; and he has given her access to his papers and his correspondence deposited in the University of Chicago library. To be sure, he is far from the first author who made the mistake of placing himself in the hands of an acolyte and then found it necessary to disavow the results. Probably ever since Boswell, writers have dreamed that some member of their entourage would turn out to be the perfect, and perfectly reverential, interlocutor and record-keeper. We do not know how Samuel Johnson felt; when all is said and done, Boswell was making his own literary bones on the flesh, so to speak, of his idol. Still, such a dream on the part of a literary eminence usually can be counted on to lead to a piece of biographical work that will be at once distastefully obsequious and impossibly cheeky.

Miller, for example, treats us to fairly detailed reports of conversations with Bellow in which what she mainly records are her own solemn and assured insights offered for the purpose of helping him to understand himself. (His response to this instruction is not recorded, except for the predictable statements from author and publisher that Bellow has not authorized this book and has even gone so far as to object to its publication.) The same kind of spiritual dissection is also performed on the books, taken chronologically from *Dangling Man* to *The Bellarosa Connection*, in a prose style clearly meant to be somewhere in the running with the works being treated. In discussing *Henderson The Rain King*, Bellow's delightful and perhaps most successfully realized novel, she quotes a speech of Henderson's in which, having brought the rains to the Wariri tribe and thus earned the title of rain king, he cries out to the heavens to be at last divested of self and granted some truth. It is a passage at once funny and audacious and eloquent. Here is her response:

> The reality and the appearance, the body and the spirit, the old self and the new self, the Yankee and the Sungo are so mixed up that the reader can only say, Yes. I hear that. What is going on with this crazy Henderson? Maybe he's not the WASP from Connecticut, the American, maybe he's Everyman.

Had it provided even a soupçon of meat, the word for this sort of commentary would be cannibalism. Certainly there is no question about the appetite that prompts it.

More serious, one supposes, in Bellow's own eyes—indeed, the one critical offense best calculated to stir the wrath of all contemporary novelists—is Miller's failure, or refusal, to make any distinction between Bellow himself and his fictional protagonists. She speaks of his books as if they were barely disguised, sometimes not disguised at all, accounts of his life.

Again, Bellow has his own share of responsibility here. Whether or not they are exactly their creator, many of his heroes do have a powerful, and totally self-serving, likeness to one another. They are, to begin with, full of a very special kind of ironic self-perception, one that offers them at once a light sprinkling of blame and a mighty dose of exculpation. They are men very much put-upon, especially by rapacious wives, but also by lawyers and other birds of prey. They are intellectuals full of the same longing to feel as deeply as they think. And they tend to agitate the great questions of history and existence in that unique and wonderful Bellovian language that is a startling happy marriage between ivory tower and big-city street.

Not only do Augie March and Eugene Henderson and Tommy Wilhelm and Moses Herzog and Charlie Citrine and Albert Corde have too much in common to seem to be the discrete products of a ranging literary curiosity, but the places they inhabit leave hardly any moral space for other people. It cannot be, for instance, that Tommy Wilhelm's and Moses Herzog's and Charlie Citrine's wives, all of whom are made to play a crucial role in the crisis at the center of the books in which they figure, would have nothing to say for themselves—if, that is, they were for a moment permitted to. (In *Anna Karenina*, the very model of a great novel about men and women, even the loathsome Karenin is granted a moment of his creator's love.)

Nor could it be that men with the qualities of mind and wit and energy displayed by all Bellow's heroes on the printed page would be left quite so orphaned in the world, quite so legitimately in need of allowance and forgiveness and the reader's tender regard. How are we—to cite only one instance of many—to understand the moment when Herzog, a history professor engaged in crawling his way out of a deep funk, is charged by his wife with taking up all the available oxygen in any room? Is it really possible to believe that this was not at some time a charge leveled against Bellow himself, a celebrated writer and a famously dazzling talker to boot?

To find the figure of Bellow in his own person lurking behind his characters, then, may in certain cases be as unavoidable as it is unavoidably unflattering to him as a creative artist. But to speak, as Miller does (and with admiration yet!), of a character whom she has just identified with Bellow as Everyman is an especially sorry, sophomoric, literary faux pas. For it would in fact be hard to name any American writer alive who is more singular: whose literary forebears would be more difficult to trace, whose "school" would be more difficult to name, who has fewer would-be imitators, whose prose is so immediately recognizable and yet so tricky to describe, whose mind moves in such surprising ways.

In one of Herzog's famous letters, which taken together constitute one of the literary-intellectual high points of postwar American literature, he scolds an old friend named Shapiro:

> The canned sauerkraut of Spengler's "Prussian Socialism," the commonplaces of the Wasteland outlook, the cheap mental stimulants of Alienation, the cant and rant of pipsqueaks about Inauthenticity and Forlornness. I can't accept this foolish dreariness. We are talking about the whole life of mankind. . . . You are too intelligent for this. You inherited rich blood. Your father peddled apples.

The foolish dreariness of which Herzog complains is actually Bellow's own cultural birthright as a modernist intellectual. The "Wasteland outlook" is a kind of eponymous evocation of the dominant literary and philosophical influence on Bellow's whole generation, an influence that spread into politics and social life and before long was vulgarized and degraded into what Lionel Trilling dubbed the "adversary culture." It is this birthright that Bellow has from the first been seeking to work his way through and cast off. The rich blood that Herzog imputes to Shapiro is Bellow's own, perhaps to some extent inherited but mainly achieved through strength of mind. The peddling of apples, psychically speaking, goes on steadily behind all his best work.

Casting away one's birthright, however, can never be a simple matter. On Bellow it has had a double effect. It has freed him to discover for himself and to articulate large and humane and consoling thoughts about the world, thoughts he has expressed not only in his writing but in his life as a citizen, where he has remained steadily and sanely his own man, impervious to the seasons of political fashion. But it has also left him reaching with an untoward degree of

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willfulness for some more highly evolved way to get in touch with life and his fellow men. It is as if all the books that fed the modernist intellectual's deep and natural preoccupation with ideas, and the very brilliance with which Bellow himself has given expression to that preoccupation, have left him fearful of being cut off from some other, truer, natural order.

Many years ago he placed himself for a time under the influence of Wilhelm Reich, a psychoanalyst whose once important insight into the way that people shut themselves off from the source of certain of their own best energies devolved first into silliness and then into insanity. Following this short-lived exercise, Bellow became interested, some decades later, in the almost equally shaky ideas of Rudolf Steiner and the anthroposophists. While the yearning for some recipe for transcendence is by no means in need of explanation in a world where God has for so long, and after confirmation from such a distinguished set of pathologists, been dead, the infatuations with Reich and Steiner lead one to think that what Bellow most wishes to transcend is his own ceaseless and insistent braininess.

For a novelist, however, most forms of spiritual striving are dangerous. The striving itself tends to put the cold hand of will on the beating hearts of his characters, who then find it difficult to come alive. The direction in which creative artists ought to be turning their eyes, at least for a large part of the time, is not upward but downward, toward the ground—down, indeed, to where the sellers of apples ply their trade. In Bellow's own case, the effort to escape the confines of the identity that accompanies his birthright has all too often made him turn his back on what is best and most authentic in himself as a writer, namely, a dry eye and a hot mind.

And though this particular combination of eye and mind is entirely, individually his, it is also one that could only have been produced in a certain time and a certain society, that is, the American metropolitan high culture of the '930s and '40s. All the more important, then, to get it right, both what Bellow is not and what he so incomparably and, so it would seem, alas, unreconciledly, is. That will take a lot more dispassion, and a lot less warmhearted presumptuousness, than Ruth Miller—or for that matter, just about anybody else who has so far taken up the task—has been able to muster.

MIDGE DECTER is a writer and critic.

CORRESPONDENCE *continued from page 4*

tion is in protest against the military's policy of not allowing admitted homosexuals to join. Lost in this debate, however, is the fact that I and most of my Harvard ROTC colleagues strongly disagree with this aspect of Defense Department doctrine, but feel it is not enough to keep us from serving our country in the armed forces.

The best way to have all socioeconomic and racial groups represented in the military is to respect military service as an honorable career choice for everyone. In the final analysis, however, it may be impossible to have a completely egalitarian military until we have a completely egalitarian society.

STEVEN D. LOWE
Wichita Falls, Texas

The writer is a second lieutenant in the Air Force.

1-900-blather

To the editors:

As a sometime complainer to your correspondence column, let me register my dissent on your new 1-900-vent-a-spleen scheme. Not that I think all the options on the telephone menu are bad: I've already dialed to hear the editors debate those of *National Review*. But correspondence to the editor should be just that—letters on paper (or via electronic mail). The act of composing one's thoughts in writing is different from and superior to shouting one's opinions into a receiver.

Call me "anti-choice," but we already have too many electronic depredators of the literacy of this great republic. (I know, in reality nothing short of lobotomy will compromise the literacy of TNR's readers, but we're talking about principle here, and a slippery slope.) Is it not TNR that champions full and reasoned electoral debate—however inconvenient that is for our harried and semi-literate electorate—over the debased politics of the sound bite? Your magazine has always stood for the primacy of the written word (and the well-written word) over the gibberish spewing from the gizmos that glut our lives. Which is why many of us subscribe, damn it.

EVE JACOBSON
New York, New York

To the editors:

Take it from one of your most loyal readers: your 900 number is too much. It's one of the most startling and bizarre things I've come across in a long time. It's the sort of thing Leon Wieseltier, say, would make fun of in your Diarist section—an aberration of contemporary culture. The only thing left is for *The New Yorker* to institute a 900 number so that I can recite my poetry over the phone.

Besides that, though, I love the magazine. Couldn't live without it.

MICHAEL KRANTZ
New York, New York
(via 900 number)

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WASHINGTON DIARIST

Mothers and battles

COULD MOTHERHOOD HAVE averted the "mother of battles"? GEORGE BUSH, SADDAM HUSSEIN, GO TO YOUR ROOMS read the placards of frustrated anti-war protesters, their slogan a new twist on the old feminist-pacifist line: if nurturing women ran the world, rowdy boys wouldn't always be spoiling for a fight. In an article titled "Nations Are Like Children" in an early February issue of *The Nation*, Anne Crittenden developed this theme, posing the recurrent question of why women seem more likely than men to oppose war. (According to polls, 67 percent of women supported the war against Iraq, compared with 83 percent of men.) "I believe part of the answer lies in the lessons women learn by raising children," she proposed, but she wasn't ready to go all the way and proclaim innate female benevolence. That was the feminist style a century ago, when the suffragist Elizabeth Cady Stanton celebrated the "feminine element," fount of "purity, virtue, morality, true religion." The current form of the argument is generally more hedged. Social conditioning, not biology or spiritual purity, explains the gender gap; parental how-to books, not deep maternal instincts, are the guide to peace. "I am convinced," Crittenden declared, "that the direct, practical experience of being a parent, and the accepted wisdom that goes with the job today, as dispensed by books and experts, predispose one to think in a certain way." So as the ground war approached, I closed my Clausewitz and turned for enlightenment to *Winning With Kids: How to Negotiate with Your Baby Bully, Kid Tyrant, Loner, Saint, Underdog or Winner So They Love Themselves and You, Too* by Tess Albert Warschaw, Ph.D., and Victoria Secunda (Bantam Books, $5.50).

BULLIES AND TYRANTS—WHAT BETter place to begin looking for tips on dealing with a discipline problem like Saddam? Warschaw and Secunda adopt the terminology of war but promise the secret to loving harmony. In their typology of the ways that parents cope with young hellions, they have little patience with the tough-guy style. Among the grown-ups they chide are "the Jungle Fighter," who "publicly humiliates . . . batters self-esteem . . . ," and "the Dictator," who "applies pressure to perform . . . [is] never satisfied . . . [and] eager to be known in public as a 'good leader.' " Sound familiar from our Desert Fighters? Warschaw and Secunda prefer a less recognizable disciplinarian, the Win/Winner, who "helps develop self-esteem . . . resolves problems . . . sets limits, [is] patient." In case any doubt remains about the optimum strategic style, the authors provide a handy chart of alternative outcomes. When Kid Tyrant meets Desert Fighter, the result is an endless battle of wills; but when Kid Tyrant meets Win/Winner, he learns "give and take." Applied to Saddam, their scenario sounds enviably simple: out there in the rough-and-tumble sandbox, he just needed to be taught how to share.

"NURSERY GEOPOLITICS," AS *THE Nation* christened the new perspective, plainly doesn't offer ideal rhetoric for the heat of battle, but it may yet find its niche. Now that the war is over, the victors are already showing a weakness for just the kind of therapeutic approach favored by cutting-edge child-rearing specialists. The style of Secretary Baker's collective security diplomacy has a lot in common with the steps in Dr. Debora Phillips's family diplomacy in *How to Give Your Child a Great Self-Image*. First you listen to your child, next you repeat what he says, then you say you understand ("you don't have to agree with his feelings to say you understand them"), finally you "put it all together." What better match for the sanctimonious era of the New World Order than a patronizing schoolmarm style?

WHILE SOME ANTI-WAR DEMONstrators were urging our leaders to take a more "feminized" view of the war, some Pentagon officials were worried that our troops at the front might do just that. Would the soldiers in the Gulf—an older force, more likely to be married and have children—be more "risk-averse," their military zeal undermined by domestic worries? The feminist dream will have to await a future test, but the Pentagon concern about competing martial and parental loyalties is no longer merely hypothetical. Not that anyone is complaining about troop performance on the battlefield: far from it. But remember the discussion on the home front about allowing voluntary exemptions from hazardous duty abroad for single parents or for one parent in military couples (of whom there are now plenty)? The debate broke out in midwar, but it won't go away just because the war is over. Although Secretary Cheney and General Powell bluntly rejected the idea, and the Senate voted 54-38 in February against a non-binding resolution to allow the option, it's the quintessential motherhood issue. In the glow of peace, a carefully worded proposal (exemption presented as a choice, not a requirement, and available to men and women alike) is bound to be popular. It may yet arouse surprising debate, however. I predict plenty of feminists starting to worry about a military "mommy track." Meanwhile, support will doubtless emerge at the Pentagon, both among traditionalists still leery of women in uniform and innovators determined to see a volunteer, mature, co-ed force thrive. The result may start to sound like what some suffragists dreamed of: the military preaching about "family values."

THE END OF ANOTHER WAR, THE cold one, has occasioned a curious metamorphosis of weaponry in another part of the world. Bulgaria has emerged as a leading exporter of computer viruses. "Not only do the Bulgarians produce the most computer viruses, they produce the best," Morton Swimmer of Hamburg University's Virus Test Center told *The New York Times*. One especially virulent strain, Dark Avenger, has turned up in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Hungary, and also in American military computers. This is the same country that was briefly renowned some years ago for exporting germs in a somewhat different form: as poison on the tips of umbrellas. In 1978 in London Georgi Markov, a Bulgarian exile who worked for Radio Free Europe denouncing Communist oppression in his native land, was stabbed in the leg by a Bulgarian spy armed with an outwardly innocuous bumbershoot. Markov died of blood poisoning four days later. From poison darts to state-of-the-art computer hacking, all in a decade. It's amazing what a little democracy can do.

ANN HULBERT

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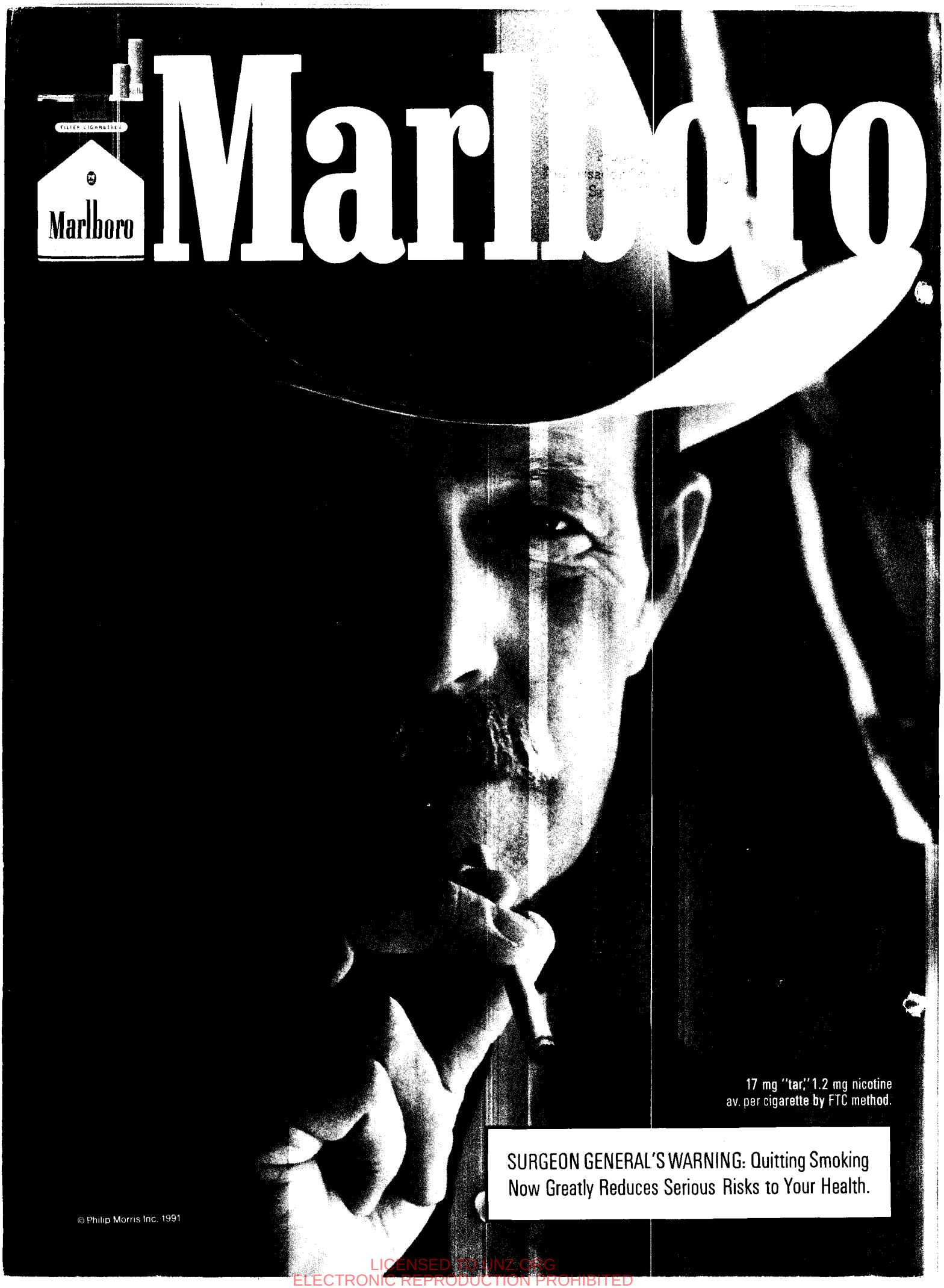
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